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Christ in Glory.

From Bettini's Monte Sancto di Dio; Florence. 1477.

ITALIAN BOOK ILLUSTRATIONS

Chiefly of the Fifteenth Century

By

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ITALIAN BOOK ILLUSTRATIONS

CHAPTER I

The purchasers of illustrated books—Decoration versus *illustration—Early examples of printed initials and borders—Classes of books in which illustrations are found.*

ILLUSTRATIONS in books have always appealed to one or other of two classes of book-buyers, those who love pictures and those who love, or imagine they love, art. The worst books of all are naturally those, from the famous *Nuremberg Chronicle* onwards, which the business instincts of publishers have provided for the well-to-do citizens, who convince themselves of their possession of artistic instincts by insisting that the illustrations in the few books they buy shall be large, striking, and plentiful. But the books which have been designed to please the eyes of a more cultivated class than this have seldom been entirely successful. The soberness of printed books appears to resent attempts at too great magnificence, and few artists of note, when they have attempted book-illustration, have worked with any due sense of the limitations imposed on them by the necessities of the press. In this respect the French have been the most successful, for, while their very popular books have never been peculiarly good—in the fifteenth century the cuts in them were rather conspicuously bad—the good taste which characterises even the wealthiest of educated Frenchmen has reaped its reward in a succession of charming

illustrated books, from the *livres d'heures* of the fifteenth century to the fascinating volumes, only spoilt by their heavy paper, which are still turned out from the best French presses. But the most

Examples of "Sweynheym and Pannartz" initials used by Riessinger.

delightful book-illustrators have always been those who have worked with simplicity and directness to please simple readers, and among these—despite the *naïveté* and quaintness of the early German cuts,

Examples of Ratdolt's second set of initials from the APPIAN *of* 1477.

and the real beauty of many of the Dutch—the palm must certainly be given to the Italians. During the fifteenth century the illustrated books printed in Italy to attract wealthy purchasers may almost be counted on the fingers, and, with the exception of the *Hypnerotomachia*, none of them take the highest rank. The rich Italian book-

lovers preferred to have their purchases decorated by hand, and for the first twenty years after the introduction of typography (in 1465 at the monastery of Subiaco, near Rome), not only illustrations, but printed initials and other decorations were entirely neglected by the vast majority of the Italian printers. Where they occur they were plainly put forward as experiments, the ill-success of which is sufficiently proved by their repeated abandonment.

It is worth while to bring out this point with some clearness, because a paragraph in Dr. Lippmann's useful monograph, *The Art of Wood Engraving in Italy in the Fifteenth Century* (Quaritch, 1888), is certainly calculated to mislead. He there writes (pp. 3, 4):—

"The Italian printers had to sustain the rivalry of the splendidly illuminated manuscripts, which they could only overcome by strenuous endeavours to embellish the pages of their books with equally attractive decorations. The general characteristic difference between German and Italian illustrative work might be defined by stating that it was developed in Germany from a mere love of pictures, as a sort of dramatic commentary upon the text which they accompanied; and in Italy from the desire for beautifying books, as well as everything else, with decorative graces. In Germany, the proper function of book-illustration was instruction; in Italy, ornament."

The distinction thus suggested is a very neat one, but it rests on rather a slight foundation of fact. What amount of instruction may have been gathered from the woodcuts in German books is a question which does not greatly concern us. It was certainly not very large, for the German printers were not superior to the common tricks of the time, drawing freely on their imaginations for their portraits of persons and views of places, and making the same cuts serve again and again for totally different subjects. Moreover, as we shall see, the classes of books for which illustration was thought appropriate were almost exactly the same in both countries. In Italy, again, the element of instruction, pure and simple, was certainly not lacking. Among the handful of illustrated books produced in the earlier years of Italian printing (while yet the rivalry of the beautifully illustrated manuscripts was keenly felt), we find some (the *Ptolemy* at Rome in 1478, and the *Sette Giornate*

della Geografia of Berlinghieri, printed at Florence about 1480) which contain maps, and others, notably several of the books printed by Erhard Ratdolt at Venice between 1476 and 1485, which contain rather elaborate diagrams. The cuts also of military engines in the *Valturius*, printed at Verona in 1472, must certainly be reckoned as instructive.

It would thus not be difficult to show that the proportion of the element of instruction in German and Italian books is not very largely different. As regards the element of decoration, it is certainly true that the Italian* printers had a keener decorative instinct; but the decorative instinct of early printers was shown for the most part not "by strenuous endeavours to embellish the pages of their books," but by abstaining from decorating them at all, and the keener artistic instinct of the Italians is mainly evidenced by the greater completeness of their abstention. In Italy, as well as in Germany, until well into the sixteenth century, it is common to find books with the spaces for the initial letters at the beginning of chapters left to be filled in by hand; and it is notable that Aldus, when he attempted to rival the glories of the earlier Italian press-work, made the most sparing use of printed decorations, almost the only instances of his employment of them being the couple of woodcuts in the *Musæus* of 1494, the profuse ornamentation of the *Hypnerotomachia*, which he printed on commission, and the headpieces and initials in a few Greek books, where he may have been actuated by the fear that the ordinary Venetian rubricators were not very deeply versed in the mysteries of the Greek alphabet. When he specially desired to please a patron, he printed a copy on vellum and had it illuminated by hand. In the ordinary copies the spaces were left blank, and if we may judge from the Aldines bound for Grolier, the most approved method of filling them in was with absolutely plain letters painted in gold.

What is true of Aldus at the turn of the century is naturally even truer of his predecessors who worked in the seventies. The

* It should, perhaps, be mentioned that the majority of the early printers in Italy were themselves Germans, but in the fifteenth century every press was strongly influenced by its local surroundings.

immense majority of the splendid books printed during that decade at Venice and Rome have come down to us either with no initials and no decoration at all, or more or less beautifully illuminated by hand. At Venice in 1469–72 a workshop seems to have existed, independently of any firm of printers, to which the purchasers of books, printed by Jenson and the brothers De Spira, could send them to be cheaply illuminated by means of a labour-saving device. Patterns, in the approved fashions of Italian decoration, were stamped on the margins, and these were then painted over by hand. To stamp the patterns wood-blocks must have been used, and the Duc de Rivoli, in his *Bibliographie des Livres à figures vénitiens*,* has, therefore, claimed the books in which he has found them as part of his subject. The stamping, however, was merely as a guide for the illuminator, and it was done quite independently of the printer, for the borders are only found in comparatively few copies, and the same borders occur in books printed by different printers.

When we turn to the first employment of wood-engraving in decorations not intended to be coloured, we meet with an experiment of a similar character to that which we have just recorded. In a copy of the *Lactantius* printed by Sweynheym and Pannartz in 1465, seen by Dr. Lippmann, there is a woodcut border. But this ornament is not found in the majority of copies, and we cannot conclude that it was the work of the printers themselves. A copy of the same firm's *Suetonius* of 1470, in the Rylands Library, has woodcut initials, joining on to a border which decorates the inner margin of the pages on which they occur; but of nearly forty copies of books by these printers at which I have looked at the British Museum, not one possesses these decorations.

What became of the borders is not known. The initials must have come under the notice of Johann Müller (Regiomontanus), the astronomer-printer, for we find them closely imitated in the C and Q which appear in a *Vegius Laudensis* attributed to his press at Nuremberg, and probably printed about 1473. The letters themselves must have been acquired by Sixtus Riessinger, when he removed from

* See a review of the Duc de Rivoli's book by Dr. Paul Kristeller in the *Archivio Storico delle Arti*.

Naples to Rome in 1480, for we find them in his editions of the *Tractatus Solemnis* of Philippus de Barberiis, and of a warning written by one R. D. G. M. against a certain hateful vice (possibly part of a larger book). Riessinger's last book is dated December 20, 1493, and three of the letters appear again in the *Boethius* printed by Oliverius Servius, February 20, 1484, after which I am unable to follow them. Their original connection with the border with which they are found in the *Lactantius* may be traced in the absence of the lines on the outer side, showing that they were intended to join on to a larger design.

The first firm which deliberately attempted to render its books independent of the colourist was that of Erhard Ratdolt, Bernhard Maler, and Peter Löslein, who started printing at Venice in 1476. In the very full bibliography appended to Mr. G. R. Redgrave's beautiful monograph on *Erhard Ratdolt and his Work at Venice*, recently printed by the Bibliographical Society for its members, an exact list will be found of the ten different sets of initials used by Ratdolt, together with reproductions of four of his seven magnificent borders. His first alphabet, of which we know of twelve letters as existing, was prepared for the different editions of the *Kalendar* of Johannes Regiomontanus (Johann Müller), printed in 1476 and 1478. The letters are difficult to read, and have a rustic appearance, resembling more nearly some in use at Ulm than any others which I have seen. The second alphabet, of which only seven letters seem to have been used, is much finer, and is distinctly Italian in character, the ground being black, and the form of the letters standing out clearly in white, interlaced with branch-work tapering off into delicate leaves. The other eight alphabets fall far short of this, though some of them are sufficiently graceful. Two small printed initials are found in the *Fasciculus Temporum* printed by G. Walch at Venice in 1479. In Frezzi's *Quadriregio*, printed by S. Arndes at Perusia in 1481, there is a magnificent initial L, and in the *Æsop* printed by Matthias Moravus at Naples in 1485, there are one or two good letters. It is probable that there are a few other instances of their use in early Italian books with which I am unacquainted, but there can be no doubt, from their extreme rarity, that as regards this element of decoration the general

attitude of the best printers was one of absolute refusal to compete with the colourists.

The early history of the use of borders to decorate the first page of text is not very different from that of initials. There is a neat border of interlacing strap-work to the book of Philippus de Barberiis printed by Riessinger, and in 1476 we find two very handsome borders (the smaller of which has been used to adorn the cover of Messrs. Paul & Co.'s magazine, *Bibliographica*), frequently repeated in the only book printed at Polliano, a village four miles from Verona. The book is an edition of Petrarch's *De Viris Illustribus*, and the borders were intended to serve as frames for portraits of the heroes, to be supplied by the miniaturists, a use to which they have been put in one of the two copies in the British Museum, while in the other they remain blank. There is a border also in the Verona *Æsop* of 1479, and perhaps some occur in other books which I have overlooked; but the only printer who used them extensively was Erhard Ratdolt, and it is noticeable that six of his seven borders appear in the first three years of his career (1476–78), that only one of these (that which appears in the second volume of the *Appian* of 1477, and again in the *Euclid* of 1482), was used subsequently, and that the seventh border is a very poor affair compared to its predecessors, and appears only in the later reprints (1482, '83, and '85) of the *Kalendar* of Regiomontanus, a popular book with which a printed border seems to have been specially connected. The inference is obvious that Ratdolt found that his patrons still preferred to intrust the decoration of their books to the colourist.

Yet of the beauty of all but the last of these woodcut borders it is difficult to speak too highly. The first, which surrounds the Calendars of 1476 and 1478, and is our earliest example of a decorative title-page, has been so often reproduced that I content myself here with

indicating its style by means of a slightly reduced *facsimile* of one of the sides. The first of the two borders to the *Appian* is sometimes found printed in red, which greatly enhances its effect. The centre of the lower compartment is occupied by a graceful Italian shield surrounded by a circle of laurels; from each side of this proceeds branch-work, similar to that in the second set of initials, and surrounding the entire page. The border to the second volume is of the same character, but surrounds only three sides of the page. The fourth and fifth borders, those of the *Cepio* and the *Dionysius*, are closely similar; but in the first there are two crossed shields in a plain circle, in the second one shield only, surrounded by a wreath. The design of these borders is much more delicate than in those of the *Appian*, the stem of the branches being thinner, and the black ground being mainly covered with the foliage. The sixth border, used in the Latin and Italian editions of the *Ars Moriendi* of 1478, is composed of acorns and oak leaves, and though very striking is hardly as fine as its predecessors. The seventh, as has been said, is altogether poor.

Who designed these beautiful borders we do not know. The six good ones were only used (save for the reappearance of No. 3 in the *Euclid* of 1482) while Bernhard Maler, or Bernhardus Pictor, as he is called in the Latin colophons, was associated with Ratdolt. In 1478 they parted company, and (save for the *Euclid*) the borders disappear, Maler's own books being also undecorated. It has been contended that Maler or Pictor was an epithet, and not a mere surname, and that Bernhard the Painter was the designer to the firm; but this is only a hypothesis, which we cannot verify. The two points which we must note are (i.) the great skill shown in the design and execution of these borders compared with the rudeness of most of the woodcut pictures to which we must soon turn, and (ii.) the fact that they were not imitated, and were speedily disused. The example here shown (taken by Mr. Nimmo's kind permission from Mr. Horatio Brown's *Venetian Printing Press*) is from the *Cepio*. The arms on the shields are, of course, not part of the original design.

If Ratdolt's experiments during the golden age of printing had been successful and provoked imitators, Dr. Lippmann's theory that the province of the woodcutter in Italy was decoration rather than illustration

Coriolanus Cepio Clariſſimo uiro Marco Antonio Mauroceno equiti apud illuſtriſſimū ducem Burgundię Venetorū oratori felicitatem.

QVom prefectus triremis ad claſſem proficiſcerer/quam feliciſſimus imperator Venetoꝝ Petrus Mocenicus contra Othomanum Turcoꝝ principē ducebat: uehementer rogaſti me/ut quicqd in hac expeditiōne geſtum eſſet litteris mandarem: affirmans ea te Apollinis oraculo uetiora habiturum quę a me ſcripta forent. Igiť ut tibi morē gererem quę ab imperatore Mocenico p quadriennīū geſta ſunt annotaui: Tanto enim tempore & ille imperiū geſſit/ & ego prefectura functus ſum. Quappter opuſculū in quo hęc ſcripta ſunt tibi mitto: quod qū perlegeris/ nō minus te egregias imperatoris uirtutes q̄ magnifica ipſius geſta admiratuꝝ certū habeo: meritoq; damnabis eorū ſententiā qui affirmare ſolent effœtam eſſe naturam: nec producere tales uiros quales priſcis temporibus extiterūt: omniaq; mundo ſeneſcente degeneraſſe: q̄ falſi ſint uel ex hoc maxime apparet. Nam ſi

Border to the first page of the Cepio *of* 1477.

would have been abundantly true. But the course of the trade in illustrated books proceeded on the same lines in Italy as in Germany and other countries. The most fastidious Italian book-lovers were as conservative then as the French are now. Just as the Frenchman will not have cloth-covered books, because in theory, though not often in practice, he prefers his books properly bound, so the Italian book-lover preferred the books with the blank spaces because he always intended to have them beautifully decorated by hand, though the intention was as often as not unfulfilled. This temper lasted for many years—as we have seen, it affected the practice of Aldus himself; but as books cheapened its absurdity was gradually perceived. We have very little information as to book-prices in Italy, and that little is rendered almost useless by the difficulties of the coinage. But that editions grew larger, press-work more hurried and less careful, and that by about 1490 a very large number of books were being produced to tempt purchasers of very moderate means, cannot be gainsaid. That the buyer of an expensive book would send it to be illuminated was a possible fiction; that the buyer of a cheap one would do so was inconceivable, and in the interest of the majority of purchasers, printers began to complete and decorate their cheap books themselves, while they still left blanks in handsomer volumes. From the outset it was the humbler class of purchasers for whom the illustrated books had been designed. The rudeness of the pictures at which we shall soon be looking will speedily convince us of this, and by the time that they become really beautiful the character of the books in which they occur is very clearly marked. The fine editions of the classics and the learned treatises, which the patrons of literature loved to purchase, the books printed on splendid paper with all the glories of Italian press-work—there are no pictures in any but a handful of these. It is in the little books of devotion, or of popular morality or education, the fables, the almanacs, the treatises of astrology and chiromancy, the *rappresentationi* or miracle plays, and the *novelle*—all the books, in fact, which appeal to readers who do not profess to be literary—that pictures appear. Side by side with these it is true that at Venice we find illustrations and decorative borders in a handful of larger books, standard works of established reputation: Petrarch's *Trionfi*, Dante's *Divina Commedia*, Boccaccio's *Decamerone*, translations of Livy and

Herodotus, a Terence, an Ovid, and a few others. But the faulty press-work of these larger volumes betrays their really popular nature. Venice abounded with well-to-do shopkeepers and merchants, who could afford more imposing volumes than the chap-books beloved of the peasants and artisans, while their taste was not widely different. The Italian woodcutters were very democratic. The name of not one of them has come to us as more than a conjecture, and their best work was all done, not for the connoisseur, but for the crowd.

CHAPTER II

The First Picture Books

The first printing press in Italy was set up in 1465 by two Germans, Conrad Sweynheym and Arnold Pannartz, at the Benedictine monastery of Saint Scholastica, at Subiaco, near Rome. Many of the monks were Germans, and the abbot of the monastery was Cardinal Turrecremata. In 1467 another German, Ulrich Hahn, started printing in Rome (whither in the latter half of the year Sweynheym and Pannartz also removed), and the first book which he issued came out under the auspices of the same cardinal, and is interesting to us as the first illustrated book printed in Italy. Turrecremata had written a series of meditations, chiefly on the life of Christ, and had caused frescoes on the same subjects to be painted on the walls of the cloister of the church of San Maria di Minerva at Rome. Hahn now printed the Meditations, with a large woodcut at the head of each of them, in amazingly rude imitation of the frescoes.* The frescoes themselves were probably fine. When we get used to the rudeness of the cuts, we are left free to admire a certain largeness and dignity of design which has not wholly disappeared under the craftsman's hands. In addition to a large genealogical tree, the woodcuts are thirty-three† in number, of which the first three represent the creation of the world (among the animals is a delightful elephant), the creation of

* We learn the history of the cuts from the inscription, printed in red ink, which heads the book : "Meditationes Reverendissimi patris domini Johannis de Turrecremata sacrosancte Romane ecclesie cardinalis posite & depicte de ipsius mandato in ecclesie ambitu Marie de Minerva, Rome."

† Three of these—the Flight into Egypt, the Temptation, and the symbolical representation of the Trinity—do not appear in the first edition, while that of the Last Judgment is omitted from the reprints.

man, and the wretched plight of Adam and Eve after the Fall. The next twenty-two are taken from the Gospel narrative, and these are followed by representations of a procession of the Eucharist; the three strangers who appeared to Abraham, symbolising the Holy Trinity; the Last Judgment, St. Sixtus, the Assumption, Angels, Saints, and a Mass

Christ before Pilate. From the MEDITATIONES *of Turrecremata, Rome,* 1473 (1467).

for the Dead, in which the worshippers ranged on each side of the altar probably represent souls, as they are all naked.

Dr. Lippmann, who is fond of such pronouncements and conjectures, declares that these rude cuts are "thoroughly Germanic" in style and were probably executed by Hahn himself, who was afterwards too busy to take up such work. It is more likely that the book was only printed to secure the patronage of Turrecremata, and that the printer, who shortly after gained the help of the famous scholar Campanus for his editions of the classics, set little store by this popular book, and did not care to

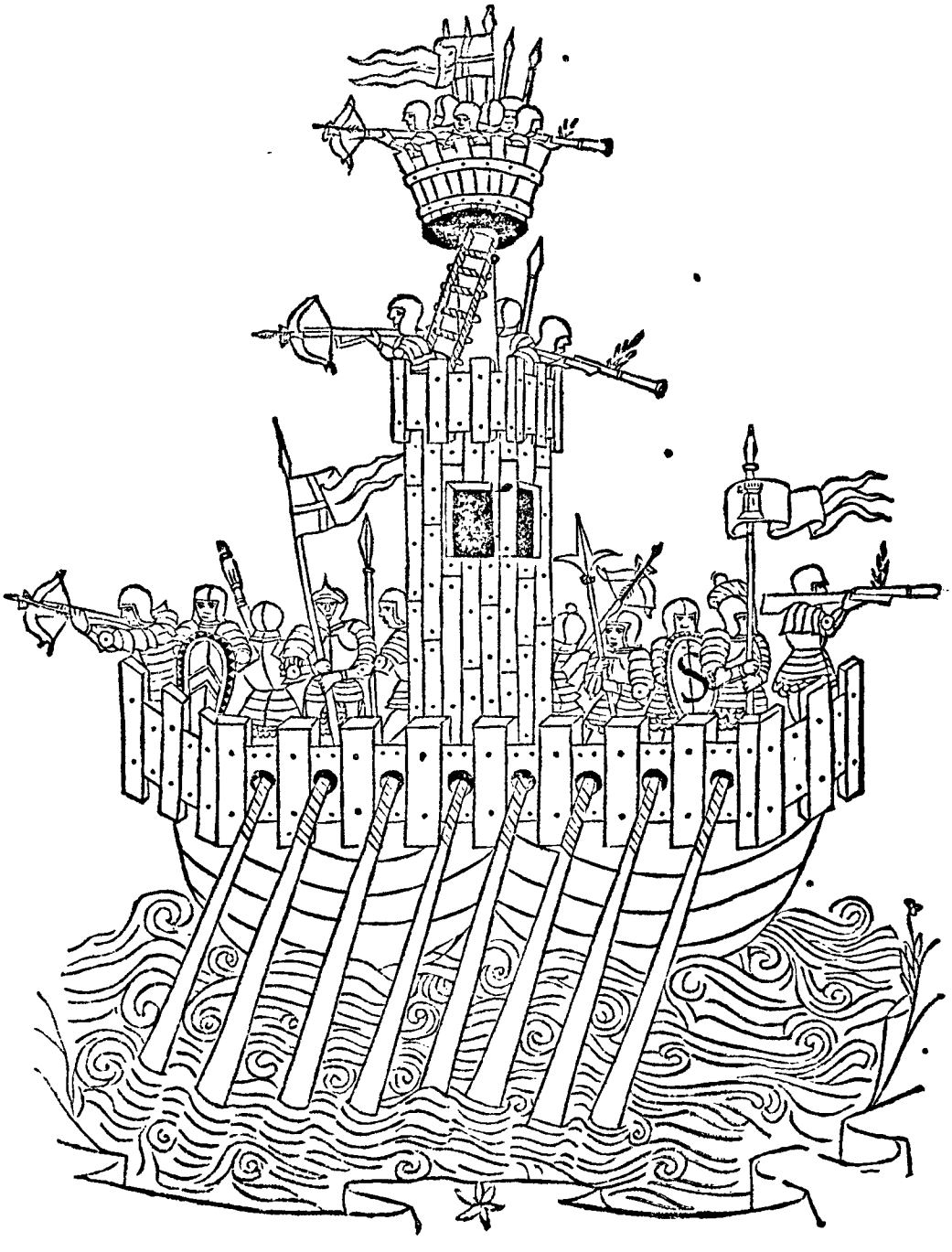
follow it up, though he was content to reprint it in 1473 and again in 1478. To attribute the cuts to him savours rather of guesswork, and even their "thoroughly Germanic" style is not undisputed. Whoever the craftsman, he was clearly untrained, and the style on which an untrained workman stumbles is rather a matter of accident than of artistic influences.

In 1471 two Italian Bibles were printed in Venice, one by Vindelinus de Spira, the other, probably, by Jenson. In Dibdin's description of the latter in the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana*, he says that six spaces were left blank at the beginning of the book for the miniaturist to fill them in with representations of the work of the six days of Creation, and that in the Spencer copy (now the Rylands) they have been so filled in. Mr. Duff, however, tells me that though the colour is heavily laid on, woodcut outlines can be distinctly traced beneath it. In the copy at the British Museum the six spaces all remain blank, and it is therefore reasonable to infer that the pictures which appear in the Rylands copy were subsequently added in some illuminator's workshop, in the same way as the borders which we noticed in our first chapter.*

With the edition of the *De Re Militari* of Robertus Valturius printed by John of Verona in his native city in 1472, we approach the first illustrated book produced in Italy by a native printer, and one of the very few books with woodcuts which were intended for book-buyers of means and discrimination. The book is a handsome folio, well printed, though neither paper nor press-work is quite of the finest, and the eighty-two cuts with which it is illustrated are drawn in firm and graceful outlines, which leave little to be desired. The book had been written some years before and dedicated to Sigismund Malatesta, who died in 1464. The cuts in the printed edition must have been copied from the drawings in the original manuscript, and these have been ascribed with some probability to the medallist Matteo de' Pasti, who lived at the court of

* The following note by Mr. Duff gives fuller information about these cuts:—

"They are six in number; the first five depicting the days of the creation, the sixth the Almighty talking to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. The cuts had originally no border and were in simple outline, but some one has drawn a coloured border round each, and also coloured the cuts. The smallest is about 55 mm. high, the largest 85, and all are about 60 wide. Spaces are left at the side of the text for them. They occur on leaf 10 verso and leaf 11 recto, though I think they should rather be called leaves 11 and 12, as a blank must be wanting at the beginning or end of introduction."



Warship from the VALTURIUS, *printed at Verona*, 1472. *(Reduced.)*

Malatesta, and whose skill Valturius had commended in a letter written in the name of Malatesta to Mahomet II. Of the eighty-two woodcuts the great majority represent the complicated military machines then in use, but a few which introduce figures of men or animals gave the artist greater opportunities. We may particularly note the pictures of war-chariots drawn by oxen and horses, the shielded "rams" and "tortoises" used in assaults, a sketch of a soldier battering at a gate, another of two soldiers working a movable bridge across a river, and a wonderful "great Arabic engine for assaulting towns, of great strength, and fitted with bridges, ladders, and various equipments," all of which are worked into the form of an extraordinary griffin-like creature, with a beautiful waddle. The most ambitious of the pictures is that shown in the accompanying illustration, which, though not perhaps the most vigorous in the book, shows very effectively the skilfulness of the execution compared with other contemporary work. Another edition, with copies of the cuts, was printed in the same town in 1483 by Boninus de Boninis.

Only one other early illustrated book is known to have been printed at Verona. This is an edition by Giovanni Avisio of the Italian version by Accio Zucco of one of the commonest of the medieval collections of fables which passed under the name of *Æsop*. Its real authorship is a mystery, one theory attributing it to an Englishman, Walter, Archbishop of Palermo, in the time of Henry II. The Verona edition (I quote the description from my *Early Illustrated Books*) has a frontispiece in which the translator is seen presenting his book to a laurel-crowned person sitting in a portico, through which there is a distant view. This is followed by a page printed throughout in capitals, containing the title of the book, but ending with a "foeliciter incipit." On the back of this is a tomb-like erection, bearing the inscription "lepidissimi Æsopi fabellæ,' and facing this is a page surrounded by an ornamental border, at the foot of which is the usual shield supported by little naked boys. Within the border are the Latin verses beginning

"Ut iuuet et prosit conatum pagina præsens
Dulcius arrident seria picta iocis:"

the lines being spaced out with fragments from the ornamental borders

which surround each of the pictures in the body of the book. These must have been drawn from very spirited and clever originals, and the cutter was possessed of some technical skill. He was not able, however, to give different values to the different parts of the designs, so that the

From Boccaccio's PHILICOLO. *Naples*, 1478.

general effect is often confused (the confusion being increased by the figures being mostly too large for the little frames), and this is one of the few books with woodcuts which the colourist was able to improve. The copy in the King's Library at the British Museum has been painted with some delicacy, and the result is very pleasing and decidedly clearer than in the uncoloured copies.

The year before the appearance of the Verona Æsop, Sixtus Riessinger had printed, at Naples, Boccaccio's *Libro di Florio et di Bianzefiore chiamato Philicolo* in a handsome folio, with his device at the end and forty-one woodcuts, measuring about four and a half inches each way. The execution of the cuts varies very greatly, the majority of them showing hasty work, while here and there a single figure, like that of Blancheflore in the illustration here given, preserves the delicate beauty which must have marked many of the original designs. Among other cuts which deserve special mention, we may mention one where the lovers are approaching the King and Queen, and a marriage scene at the end, distinguished by its excellent grouping, but to which the engraver has not done justice. At least one of the cuts from this book appears in a later chap-book version of the story, a copy of which is in the library at Erlangen.*

During his stay at Naples, Riessinger also printed another illustrated book, a prose version in the Florentine dialect of the *Epistolæ Heroidum* of Ovid. A copy of this, in the possession of Mr. Fairfax Murray, was shown at the Italian Exhibition at the New Gallery in 1894, and contains numerous cuts in the same style as the *Philicolo.*

The colophon of the *Philicclo* tells us that it was printed in the excellent city of Naples, the Queen of Italy, with the aid and favour of the noble man, Francisco de Tuppo, a student of law. Tuppo concerned himself in the printing of several other books, mostly relating to his own profession; but he once again indulged in the production of an illustrated book of a lighter kind, the well-known *Æsop* of 1485, which he translated himself. No other name but his own occurs in the colophon, but the printing was probably done for him by Matthias Moravus of Olmütz, who had been at work at Naples for some years. The cuts are eighty-seven in number; one of them, representing the death of Æsop, occupying a full page. They are firmly and strongly cut by a skilful engraver, and exhibit a curious modification of German work by Italian influence. This is especially marked in the illustrations to the life of Æsop, who passed in the middle ages for a

* See Dr. H. Varnhagen, *Über eine Sammlung alter Italianische Drucke der Erlanger Universitäts bibliothek* (Erlangen, 1892). The tract is said to contain eight cuts, but I can only speak of the one of the lovers being burnt which I recognised in the reproduction.

shrewd and knavish clown. Here the figures are all grotesquely large, and Æsop himself approximates closely to the type assigned him in the Ulm edition of 1480, but the work is more elaborate and finished than in the German cuts. The purely decorative work owes nothing to German influence. The large border to the first page of the fables (used again in the Hebrew Bible of 1488) shows a magnificent design of cupids and foliage on a black ground. Each of the cuts to the fables is set in a frame made up of several different pieces, the upper compartments being variously filled with representations: Hercules wrestling with Antæus, Hercules riding on a lion, and a battle between mounted pigmies. The ground of these compartments is black, relieved by a delicate floral design, which appears again in the four printed initials which the book contains. The general effect is very rich and decorative, though most of the designs show but little imagination. In the one here shown, the drawing of the mule is spirited enough, but if the fly was really as big as the artist has represented it, its claim to have a share in goading the mule along was not altogether unreasonable. A title-cut of an astronomer in a little book on the *Noble Arte de Astrologia*, whose calculations date from 1485, is in the same style as those to the life of Æsop.

About 1480 Riessinger removed to Rome, and there printed the edition of the *Tractatus Solemnis* of Philippus de Barberiis, at which we have already looked for the sake of its initials and strap-work border. This contains woodcuts of the twelve Sibyls and the virgin Proba, each surrounded by an architectural border. Four of the cuts are reproduced by the Vicomte Delaborde in his delightful book, *La Gravure en Italie avant Marc Antoine*, where he praises them rather highly.* The original designs were no doubt graceful and dignified, but they have been rendered so stiff and ungainly by clumsy (though careful) cutting, that their effect is not pleasing. I must own to a perhaps childish preference for the cuts in another edition of the same work, issued under the title of *Opuscula*, by the printer-physician, Joannes Philippus de Lignamine, in 1481. In this the twelve Sibyls and Proba are reinforced by representations of the

* The reproductions are dated "Rome, 1482," but the date, as far as I am aware, is conjectural. Dr. Lippmann ascribes this edition also to Philippus de Lignamine, imagining that he discarded his 1481 cuts in favour of these more dignified ones. But the name of Sixtus Riessinger appears in some copies at the end of the book, and his shield occurs in one of the corners of the border surrounding the Sibylla Persica.

From Tuppo's Æsop. *Naples*, 1485.

twelve Prophets, St. John the Baptist, the Holy Family, Christ with the emblems of His passion, and the philosopher Plato. There are thus twenty-nine different subjects, but the same cut is used for Plato, Malachi, and Hosea, and two others are used twice. The woodcutter was unexpert, but not timorous, and the rakish appearance his rapid handling sometimes conveys is rather pleasing. Lignamine printed also another book, the *Herbarium* of Apuleius Barbarus, with numerous botanical cuts of no great interest, and the same description may be applied to a *Cheiromantia* printed by Riessinger. In the last decade of the century, book-illustration was taken up again at Rome by the popular printers, Silber and Plannck, but during the eighties it does not seem to have flourished.

So far all the attempts at illustration we have noticed have been by woodcuts. In Florence, however, where the art of wood-engraving was afterwards practised so successfully, the earliest experiments in book-illustration were made on copper. The first of these are found in a devotional treatise, Bettini's *Monte Santo di Dio*, printed in 1477 by Nicolaus Lorenz, of Breslau. In this there are three plates, the first of which has for its subject the Holy Mountain, from which the book takes its name. A ladder, whose rungs are inscribed with the names of the theological virtues, leads up to it, and beside it stands a youth, hesitating whether to climb or not, while the devil is snaring one of his feet in a noose. In the second plate (which forms the frontispiece to this paper), Christ is represented surrounded by a "mandorla," or almond-shaped halo, formed by the heads of not very graceful cherubs. The last plate, the smallest and least successful of the three, is an unimaginative picture of the torments of hell. On the whole, both in design and technique, the second plate is the finest, the figure of Christ being dignified and the engraving fairly sharp. In the plate of the Monte Santo it is woolly, and the design, though pleasing enough, lacks distinction. Four years later, in 1481, the *Monte Santo* was followed by an ambitious edition of the *Divina Commedia*, swollen, by the ponderous commentary of Landino, into a large folio volume. Engravings were executed to illustrate the first eighteen cantos of the *Inferno*, blank spaces being left for them, and the sheets at first being passed through the press a second time

to receive the impression of the plates. In some copies, however, no engravings have been inserted, in others only two, while a complete set of all the eighteen is extremely rare. It is evident that the printer was dissatisfied with his experiment after printing the first few sheets, and quickly abandoned it. Dr. Lippman conjectures that the difficulties of the double impression may have been the cause of the change of plan, and his theory is supported by the fact that only the first two plates are usually found printed with the text, the later ones being pasted into their places.

It was known that Sandro Botticelli had executed a series of designs in illustration of the *Divina Commedia*, and a passage in Vasari tells us that a Florentine engraver, one Baccio Baldini, always worked after the designs of Botticelli. On this rather slender foundation it has been customary to assert that the engravings in the *Dante* of 1481 were executed by Baldini in imitation of Botticelli, and the same attribution has been extended to the three plates in the *Monte Santo di Dio* of 1477. The discovery of Botticelli's real designs for the *Divina Commedia*, in the splendid manuscript formerly in the possession of the Duke of Hamilton, now in the Print Room at Berlin, shows that the plates in the 1481 edition are at best rather unintelligent versions of excerpts from Botticelli's designs, and the identification of the engraver with Baldini is merely conjectural. That Baldini in his engravings always imitated Botticelli does not enable us to assign every plate in which Botticelli is imitated to this engraver. In the Vicomte Delaborde's *La Gravure en Italie avant Marc Antoine* he gives reproductions from two series of engravings, one illustrating the astrological influence attributed to the planets, the other a splendid set of designs for playing cards. Both of these show the influence of Botticelli, both are attributed by the Vicomte Delaborde to Baldini. Even allowing for the poor results likely to follow from the printing of engravings on unsuitable paper and by ordinary pressmen, the plates in the *Dante* seem to me so inferior that they can hardly be by the same artist, and as our knowledge of Baldini is confined to what Vasari tells us of him, the use of his name in this case seems superfluous.

The only other early book in which copper-plates are known to have been used in Italy, except for maps, is the *Summula di pacifica*

Conscientia of Fra Pacifico di Novara, printed in 1479, at Milan, by G. Brebia and P. de Lavagnia. This contains three plates, two of them diagrams illustrating the prohibited degrees of consanguinity, while the third and (presumably) most ambitious represents the virtues of the Madonna. This last I have not seen, for the British Museum copy lacks this particular plate: an unlucky accident which makes me record in a chastened spirit Dr. Lippmann's error in speaking of the copy at the Ambrosiana as unique. One other early Milanese book contains an illustration, the woodcut portrait (here shown) of Paulus Attavanti, of Florence, which is prefixed to an addition of his *Breviarium totius juris canonici*, printed by Leonard Pachel and Ulrich Scinzenceller in 1479. The cut is a delicate one, but if its authenticity is to pass unchallenged, it must have been copied from a much earlier sketch, for, according to the *Bibliographie Universelle*, Attavanti was in his eightieth year when he died in 1495, and must therefore, in 1479, have been already sixty-four, about twice the age assigned to him in his portrait.

Portrait of the Author from Attavanti's BREVIARIUM *Milan*, 1479.

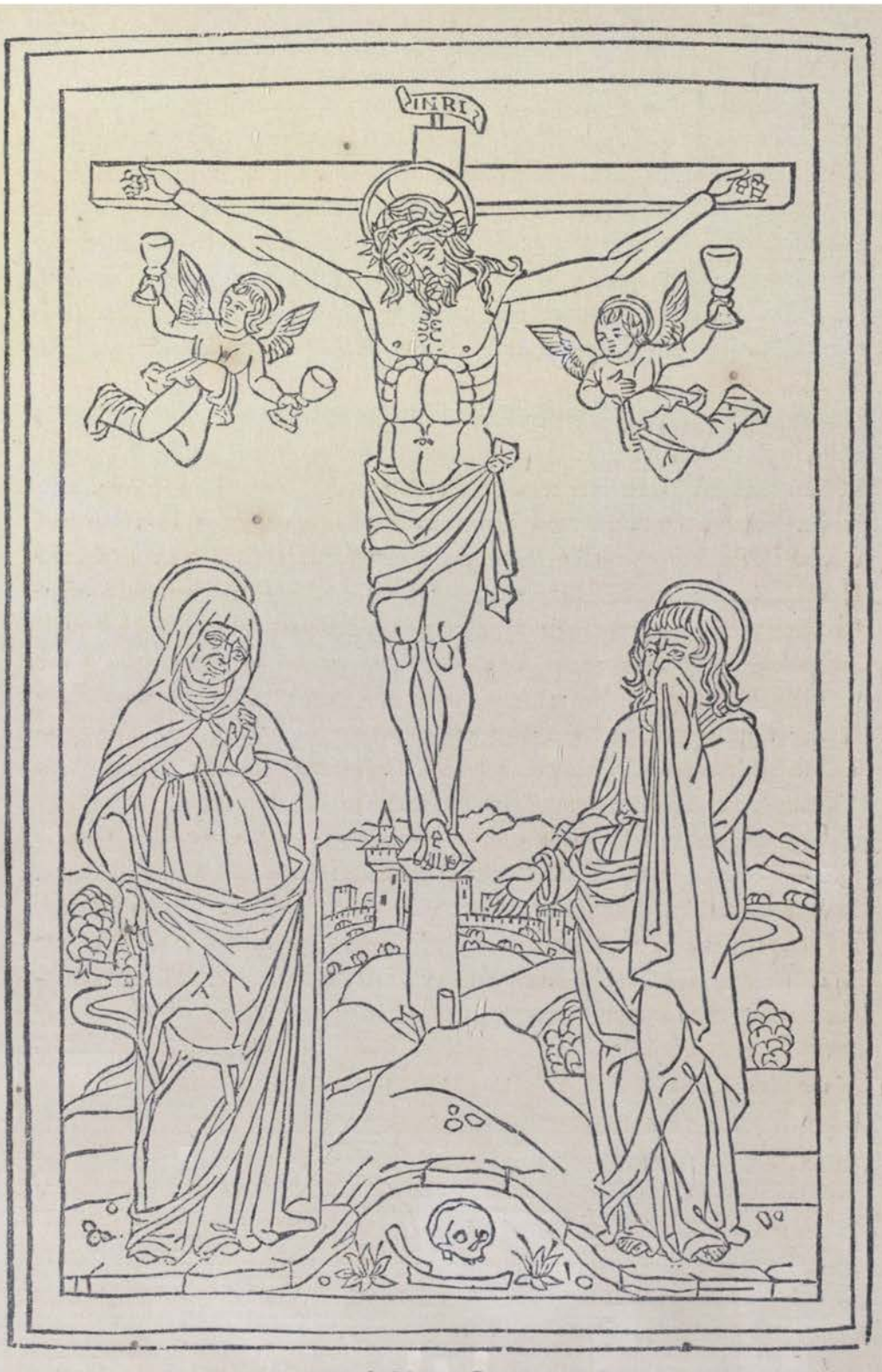
In the same year as the Milan *Breviarium*, Johann Numeister, a very wandering printer, produced an edition of the *Meditationes* of Turrecremata which, though duly dated 1479, does not contain any note as to the place of imprint. Numeister had printed at Foligno from 1470 to 1472, but after this we lose sight of him for some years. He was a native of Mentz, and in the colophon to this book

calls himself "clericus maguntinus." The type has a superficial likeness to that used in the Mentz Bible of c. 1455; the cuts show another variety of that mixture of Italian and German influences which we have noticed in the Naples *Æsop*. It is thus impossible to say with any certainty where the book was printed.

The same year, 1479, witnessed the production at Venice, by Georg Walch, of an edition of the *Fasciculus Temporum*, a popular manual of chronology, with cuts modelled on those of the German editions, most of which were printed at Cologne. This was imitated the next year by Erhard Ratdolt, whose edition was reprinted, with variations in the cuts, in 1481, '83, '84, and '85. Neither edition is of much interest; the cuts, with the exception of the two little rude representations of Venice, being quite unoriginal. In 1482, Ratdolt printed the *Poeticon Astronomicon* of Hyginus, with a considerable number of cuts of Mars, Venus, Orion, etc., represented with their mythological attributes. Some of these figures bear a distant resemblance to those in the Florentine series of engravings of the planets, of which we have just spoken—an argument, to be taken for what it is worth, of their Italian origin. But in their firm yet clumsy outline, and the pleasing quaintness, often bordering on the grotesque, the cuts are far more characteristic of Augsburg than of Venice, and though they were immensely successful, enjoying a long career in Germany and being copied also in Italy, we need not stop to examine them closely. Interesting as Erhard Ratdolt's work during his ten years' residence at Venice must always be, it is clear that his endeavours to decorate his books both with ornaments and illustrations met with little appreciation. During the later years of his stay, with the exception of the Gran Missal of 1486, he made no more experiments in this direction, and his example provoked no imitators; even Renner of Hailbrun, who pirated some of his books, not troubling to imitate the borders for which they are now chiefly valued.

In noticing the early books with woodcuts printed at Naples, I omitted to mention an unpretentious edition of the *Musicês Theoria* of Francesco Gafori, issued in 1480 by Francesco di Dino, and containing a rough woodcut illustrating the supposed origin of music by the figures of five blacksmiths working at an anvil, their hammers

being labelled with the notes they were supposed to strike. In an edition of the *Clementine Constitutions*, printed by Bernardinus Carnerius, and his son, Augustinus, at Ferrara, in 1479, there is a rather delicate little cut of the Pope and two cardinals. These complete the list of early Italian illustrated books with which I am acquainted. The older bibliographers so rarely gave any indications of the presence of woodcuts in the books they catalogued that it is probable that there are a few more, which at present I have not heard of, but my list is complete enough to give an adequate idea of the extent to which cuts were used in the golden age of printing in Italy, and I am afraid it may have wearied those of my readers whose interest is purely in art and does not extend to books. Of recent years early illustrated books have risen so greatly in value and esteem, that it seemed worth while to examine individually this little handful of the earliest Italian examples. But they are certainly more interesting to bookmen (who almost uniformly overpraise the cuts) than to students of art. There are no traces of any schools of woodcutting having come into existence, such as were flourishing during this period in Germany at Augsburg and Ulm, and rising up in Holland. Ratdolt worked with consistency at Venice, and perhaps Riessinger and Tuppo at Naples had some dim ideal of book-illustration which they were unable to realise; the books of the other printers seem to have owed their existence to a series of accidents. Clearly a market for illustrated books had not yet been found, and the printers of those days had little reason to anticipate the great increase, both in individuality and popularity, which book-illustration was soon to receive.



From the Missale Romanum, 1484.

CHAPTER III

VENICE, 1482–1500

As we have already noted, Erhard Ratdolt's illustrated books must be regarded as standing apart from the development of the art of wood-engraving in Venice, while the stamping of borders and initials as a guide to the illuminator, to which we alluded on p. 9, is only found in books printed during the years 1469–72. The beginning of a native school of wood-engravers at Venice must, therefore, be dated from the Missals printed by Octavianus Scotus in 1482, containing woodcuts of the Crucifixion, preceding the Canon of the Mass. In his review of the Duc de Rivoli's monograph, Dr. Kristeller mentions three of these 1482 Missals, and a copy of one of them is in the British Museum (3366. e.9.), though the cut is so thickly coloured that it is not easy to trace its outlines. In 1484 Nicolaus de Frankfordia printed a small octavo Missal for the use of the Dominicans. In the Museum copy of this, the cut of the Crucifixion is uncoloured, allowing us to see how small a command the graver had as yet obtained over his knife. In the same year another firm of printers, G. de Rivabenis and P. de Paganinis produced a folio Missal with a full-page cut, here reproduced. The execution is rude and clumsy, so that the sorrow and anguish which the designer endeavoured to depict have degenerated into grimace. Despite this clumsiness, the cut retains a certain breadth and nobility which compel our admiration. It would be interesting to compare with it the woodcut of the same subject printed two years later by Erhard Ratdolt in his Gran Missal. Unfortunately the only four copies of this book known to be extant are all in Hungary, and therefore unavailable for comparison.

In the same year as the Gran Missal appeared an edition, from the press of Bernardino de Benaliis, of the *Supplementum Chronicorum* of Giovanni Philippo Foresti of Bergamo. This, as its title denotes, was a compendium of history, rather fuller than the *Fasciculus Temporum*, but illustrated in much the same way with numerous cuts of cities, in this edition drawn mainly out of the artist's head. At the beginning of the book, however, are three larger cuts, representing the Creation, the Fall, and the Sacrifices of Cain and Abel, all of them copied from the corresponding illustrations in a large Bible printed by Heinrich Quentel at Cologne, about 1480.

In 1487 we know of two Venetian books with woodcuts: the one an edition printed by Ieronimo de Santis, of the *Devote Meditationi sopra la passione del Nostro Signore*, attributed to St. Bonaventura, with eleven coarsely executed cuts; the other an *Æsop*, printed by Bernardino de Benaliis, with sixty-one woodcuts copied from those in the Veronese edition of 1479. Both these books only survive in unique copies, that of the *Meditationi* being at the Biblioteca Casanatense in Rome, where it has been examined by Dr. Kristeller; that of the *Æsop* at Berlin, under the charge of Dr. Lippman, who describes the edition as a "genuine chap-book," the style of the cuts being "cramped and angular," a description fully borne out by the example he reproduces.

In 1488 a step forward was taken by the issue by Bernardino de Novara of the first illustrated edition of the *Trionfi* of Petrarch. Swollen by commentaries of Lapino, and the addition of the *Sonetti*, the *Trionfi*, though not in themselves very long, make a folio volume of some size, and the illustrator thus had plenty of room at his disposal, each of the six woodcuts measuring ten inches by six. The subjects also which had to be illustrated lent themselves easily to pictorial and decorative treatment, while the ground-plan for each of them was suggested by the poems themselves. The six books of the *Trionfi* describe respectively the triumphs of Love, of Chastity, Death, Fame, and Time, and of the true Divinity. The central feature in each picture is thus a triumphal car on which the conqueror is riding, attended by votaries, or, as in the case of Death, trampling on the prostrate bodies of his victims. Subjects like these could

hardly fail to incite both artist and engraver to do their best, but the result of their joint labours is certainly disappointing. That the fault did not rest with the designer must be at once conceded, for the arrangement and grouping of several of the pictures is excellent, that of Fame, who is represented blowing an enormous trumpet, being perhaps the best, while the Triumph of Death is certainly the weakest. But the woodcutters were as yet only 'prentice hands, and incapable of doing justice to the drawings they had to reproduce. Except for clearing out large blank spaces, the only tool in use throughout the whole of this period was the knife, and this necessitated working on soft wood and on planks cut with the grain, instead of, as now, on box-wood sawn through the tree. There was thus a constant danger of the knife slipping or splintering the wood, and the wonder is, not that for some years the work of the cutters was so cramped and angular, but that they were ever able to attain to the firm and delicate outlines, and the beautifully rounded contours at which we shall soon have to look. In the 1488 *Petrarch* this mastery is not yet exhibited, and the angularity of the lines, especially marked in the treatment of the eyes, spoils the design.

We shall not be seriously departing from chronological sequence if we look at once at the next edition of the *Trionfi*, printed by Piero Veronese in 1490–91, and reissued two years later. For this edition new designs had been made—imitated from a series of Florentine engravings on copper, now in the Print Room at the British Museum. As rendered upon wood they are very unsatisfactory. The engraver had, it is true, a much better command of his knife than his predecessor of 1488; but his work is flat and colourless, and spoilt by unintelligent shading, so that its general effect is dull and unpleasing. The designs themselves are much more crowded than those of 1488, and several differences of treatment may be marked. Thus, in the Triumph of Love, the car is being driven straight past the spectator, instead of curving round towards him. In the Triumph of Fame, the vigorous trumpet-blower is replaced by a small figure, at first calling to mind the conventional representation of Justice, seated in a mirror, and the numerous attendants are all mounted. In the Triumph of Divinity, the artist of 1488 had shown the car of the false gods being shattered to

pieces by a vision from heaven. In 1490 the car of the false gods disappears, and we have a kind of altar, surmounted by a representation of the Trinity, which is being drawn along by saints and apostles.

Returning now to 1488, we find J. L. Santritter de Hailbronn issuing in that year an edition of the *Sphæra Mundi* of Sacro Bosco, with a full-page cut on the back of the first leaf, in which we reach our first characteristic example of Venetian work. As such, the woodcut is here reproduced, and we need only note that the crown on Ptolemy's head owes its place there to the erroneous belief that the astronomer was one of the kings of Egypt. The *Sphæra Mundi* contains numerous astronomical diagrams, some of them imitated from Ratdolt's editions, a little cut of a ship and a castle and numerous initials. It was reprinted in 1490 by Octavianus Scotus, and again in 1491 by Gulielmus de Tridino, the cuts and diagrams apparently passing from printer to printer.

Two other books with woodcuts are so closely allied in style to the one here shown that we can hardly avoid grouping them together. The first of these is the *Dialogo della Seraphica Virgine Santa Catherina de Siena de la Divina Providentia*, printed by Mathio di Codeca for Lucantonio Giunta with the date "mccccIxxxiiii adi xvii de mazo." In some copies a ten and a one have been omitted, the day and the month remaining the same, and the Duc de Rivoli therefore enters the book under the year 1483. The dropping of a single numeral in dates is common enough, and though I cannot call to mind any other instance of the disappearance of two figures, it is better to suppose that this has happened than to imagine that Codeca printed for Giunta two otherwise identical editions, at an interval of eleven years to a day, with the further difficulty of having to account for no other woodcuts of equal excellence, or of a similar style, appearing at Venice for at least five years. The cut itself is reproduced by the Duc de Rivoli, and shows St. Catharine seated, and holding in each hand a book which she is presenting to two kneeling votaresses, identified with Isabella of Aragon and Beatrice d'Este. Over the saint's head a crown is held by "le bon Dieu," while a male and female saint are hovering in the air. This

picture occurs on the back of the title-page; the first page of the text of the *Dialogo* is ornamented by a dainty border running along

Frontispiece of the SPHÆRA MUNDI, 1488.

the inner margins, and by a smaller cut representing St. Catharine dictating to three scribes. Towards the end of the book there is

another full-page cut, in which the saint is kneeling before an altar in a chapel, through a window in which is shown a little landscape. This has been reproduced by the Vicomte Delaborde on p. 249 of his *La Gravure en Italie avant Marc Antoine.*

The third book illustrated in this style, with which I am acquainted, is a Missal printed in 1497 by Joannes Emericus de Spira, but of which earlier editions probably exist. This contains a full-page woodcut of Christ on the Cross, and both in design and execution is of great beauty.

In 1489 there was printed an edition of the *Postilla*, or sermons, of Nicolaus de Lyra, with thirty-eight small vignettes of biblical subjects, which I am unlucky enough not to have seen. They are described by Dr. Lippmann as apparently by the same artists as the contemporaneous cuts in the *Meditazioni* attributed to St. Bonaventura, at which we must now look. As we have seen, the *Meditazioni* had been already printed with woodcuts in 1487. The new edition was issued by Matteo di Codeca, and is dated February 27, 1489. As the Venetian calendar reckoned from the 1st of March, the book was really published in 1490, a fact worth noting, because the number of illustrated books issued in that year makes it almost as important a date in the annals of the Venetian press as we shall see that it is in that of Florence. Matteo di Codeca reprinted the *Meditazioni* no less than six times during the next five years, and in conjunction with B. de Benalïis published also an undated edition, probably in 1491, in which the pictures were recut on a slightly larger scale. The little book continued popular, and was issued subsequently by other printers, *e.g.*, by Gregorio di Rusconi in 1508. Some editions have eleven, others fourteen cuts, illustrating our Lord's Passion, from the raising of Lazarus to the Ascension. They are full of life and vigour, and not without tenderness, and the woodcutter's interpretation of them is adequate on the whole, though the representation of eyes remained a difficulty.

Of another book with an illustration, assigned to 1489, the real year is not quite easy to fix. This is an edition of the *De Civitate Dei* of Augustine, printed by Octavianus Scotus, "Duodecimo Kalendas Martias," 1489, the classical form in which the date is given suggesting

that the printer may have reckoned his year from January 1st. The solitary cut appears on the back of the title-page, and, though it does not fill the whole of the folio page, is of considerable size, measuring six inches by seven and a half. In the upper part of the cut St. Augustine is shown writing at a desk, uncomfortably attired in his full episcopal robes. In the lower half are battlements representing the cities of heaven and hell, and in the two corners Abel and Cain are seated, the one with his shepherd's crook and sheep, the other with some kind of mattock, as further representatives of the opposition of good and evil. The cutting is rather flat, but as the picture is not overcrowded the general effect is pleasing enough.

Of the illustrated books bearing in their colophons the date 1490, the edition of Malermi's Italian translation of the Bible is generally regarded as the most important. It was printed by Giovanni Ragazzo, at the expense of Lucantonio Giunta, and is profusely illustrated, according to Dr. Lippmann, with no less than three hundred and eighty-three* vignettes, though these include some repetitions. The Cologne Bible of 1480 was still regarded as a masterpiece of biblical illustration, and it is thus not surprising to find that most of its hundred and ten cuts furnished suggestions for the pictures in the Italian version, though the new artist not only reduced their size, but freely altered their designs. Nineteen other cuts are said to have been adapted in a similar manner from the *Postilla* of Nicolaus de Lyra of 1489. A large number, however, of the designs appear to have been especially made for the Bible, and small as they are, measuring 3 inches by 1¾, they exhibit a freedom and grace which prove that the artist to whom we are indebted for them was one of no small ability.

Who this artist was we do not know, and as this ignorance applies generally to the designers of all the illustrations in early Italian books, it may seem superfluous to draw attention to it in this particular instance. But in the woodcuts in the Malermi Bible we meet for the first time the little minuscule, *b*, which occurs also, sometimes in conjunction with other letters and in at least two different forms, in the two *Dantes* of 1491, the *Vite dei Santi Padri* (in conjunction with

* The Duc de Rivoli gives the numbers as 205 for the Old Testament and 175 for the New, or 380 in all.

i or *j*), the *Boccaccio* and *Masuccio* of 1492, the *Epistole ed Evangelii* of 1495, the *Terence* of 1497, and the *Hypnerotomachia* of 1499. In the Italian *Livy* of 1493 many of the cuts bear a very conspicuous F, others the *b*. In the reissue of the Malermi Bible in 1492, we find the same two letters. In the *Metamorphoses* of 1497 some of the cuts have an *i a*, others N. Attention was first called to these signatures, if signatures they are, in connection with the fine woodcuts in the *Hypnerotomachia*, where the large minuscule b was variously interpreted as standing for Botticelli or Bellini. Neither theory now meets with any favour, and in his *Art of Wood Engraving in Italy*, Dr. Lippmann starts a new claimant in the person of Jacopo de' Barbari, otherwise Jacob Walch, who is mentioned by Dürer, and was summoned to Nuremberg by the Emperor Maximilian in or before 1500. I cannot myself discover from Dr. Lippmann's arguments that the Barbari theory rests on any sounder basis than the discredited ascriptions to Botticelli and Bellini. It is true, to quote a happy line from Beddoes, that like "Britons, bores, and buttered toast, they all begins with B;" but I cannot myself trace any real similarity of style between the early vignettes of the Bible and the *Dantes*, and the much more mannered drawings of the *Hypnerotomachia;* and when Dr. Lippmann proceeds (with much better reason) to claim for the same artist an enormous wood-engraving of Venice, in a totally different style, the net result appears to be that counsel is greatly darkened. I cannot myself believe that the initials stand for any artist or for any single engraver; the most probable theory is that which attributes them to the different *ateliers* of wood-engraving in which the little blocks were executed.

In the same year as the Malermi Bible, Bernardino de Novara issued a new edition of the *Supplementum Chronicorum*, first illustrated in 1486. In this reprint the fancy pictures of several of the more notable cities, notably Rome and Florence, were replaced by much more correct views. Dr. Lippmann argues from certain resemblances of arrangement, that the cut of Florence must have been imitated from a large single print of this city now in the Print Room at Berlin, the engraving of which he dates before 1489, on the ground that the site of the Palazzo Strozzi, begun in that year, is still occupied

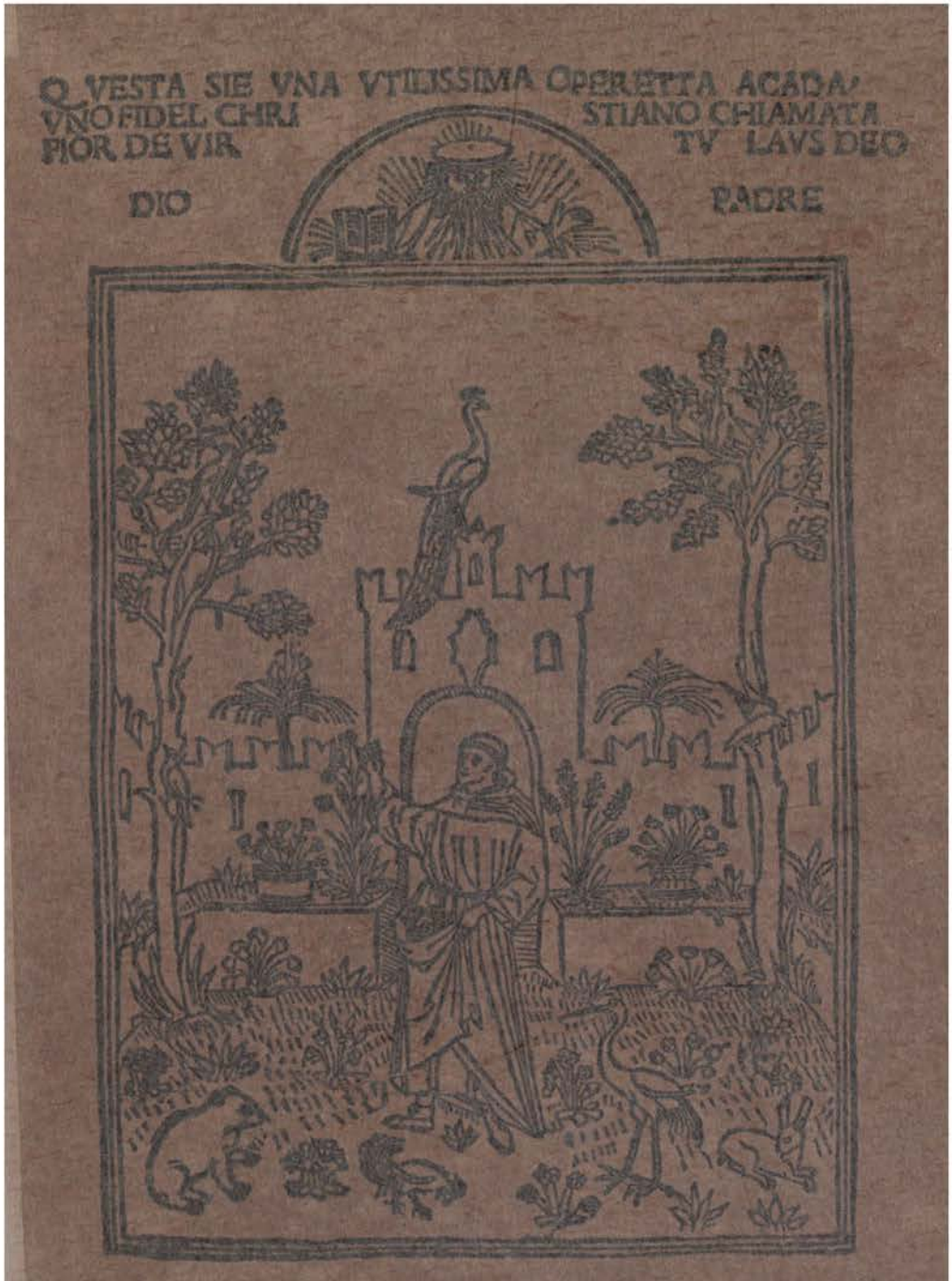
by other houses. Beyond the fact that both pictures view the city from the same point, the resemblance between them is not very distinct, nor can I conceive it possible that the large engraving, which is totally unlike in style to any early Florentine work we know, was cut in that city before 1489. Dr. Lippmann himself is obliged to allow that his unique example "seems to have been worked at a more recent date than the [hypothetical] original issue," but the difficulty as to the Palazzo Strozzi would be easily accounted for by supposing that a sixteenth-century engraver was copying an earlier drawing, without supposing the existence before 1489 of a Florentine woodcut measuring 585 millimètres in height and 1315 in length.

Two books printed by Johann Herzog in 1490 deserve a word of notice. In the first, a treatise *De Heredibus*, by Johannes Crispus de Montibus, there is a genealogical tree growing out of a recumbent human figure vigorously cut (reproduced by Dr. Lippmann, p. 69). The figure is printed in brown ink, the leaves of the tree in green, the inscriptions in red. Printing in different-coloured inks had been used by Ratdolt in his astronomical works, but this is the first example of its application to more pictorial subjects. Herzog's second book is an *Officium B. V. Mariæ* or *Horæ*, with six full-page cuts and many small vignettes. No perfect copy of this is known, and the earliest edition with which I am acquainted is that of 1493, in which the cuts are five in number: scenes from the life of Our Lady, and one picture of David playing, not on a harp, but on a violin approaching in size to a 'cello. The Museum copy of this edition is heavily coloured, but the designs appear to be graceful, especially those of the small vignettes. Each page is also surrounded by a dainty border, imitating, though with characteristic differences, the much better-known *Horæ* printed about this time in France.

We have already noticed the unhappy 1490 edition of Petrarch's *Trionfi*, and only one other book printed in this year need detain us. In this, its first illustrated edition, it possesses but a single cut, which is placed on its title-page, but the grace of this is so exquisite that it deserves the very highest rank among Venetian illustrated books. The reader, as he looks at our reproduction of

it, will doubtless at once identify the friar walking in the garden with St. Francis of Assisi, and it would be a pleasure to confirm this natural opinion. Unhappily, in the fifteenth century, saints were not allowed to walk about, even in their convent garden, without their halo (in the 1494 *Legenda Sanctorum* a pope is being cruelly birched, but he still wears his tiara!), and it is generally agreed that some other original must be found for the portrait. The authorship of the *Fior di Virtù* is not certainly known, but among the writers to whom it has been attributed, Fra Cherubino da Spoleto seems to have slightly the best claim, and as he is the only Franciscan among the suggested authors, there can be no doubt that Signor Castellani is right in identifying him with the friar in the garden. A confirmation of this view, which I do not remember to have seen mentioned, is found in the occurrence, a few years later, of a very inferior copy of this cut in one of Fra Cherubino's undoubted works. The *Fior di Virtù* was often reprinted, and in the 1492, 1493, and subsequent Venetian editions, it was further illustrated by thirty-six tiny vignettes of the stories of birds and beasts, from which its morals were drawn. In the Florentine editions, at which we shall look in our next chapter, to each of these was annexed a picture of some human instance, and as far as the vignettes are concerned, the Florentine editions easily bear away the palm. On the other hand the title-cut offers an almost unique instance of Venetian work suffering greatly by transference into the Florentine style, a disaster to which the tawdry border by which it is surrounded helps not a little.

Passing at length to the year 1491, our attention is first arrested by the appearance of two illustrated editions of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, with the bulky commentary of Landino. The first of these was published on March 3rd by Bernardino Benali and Matheo Codeca; the second on November 18th by Piero Cremonese. Both publishers went for their vignette cuts to the engravers who used the initial b, and the two sets of cuts, both of them poor, are closely similar in design, the later edition having the advantage in the little pictures being larger and better executed. Two conventions of the day were mainly responsible for the artist's failure in these designs. In the first place it was customary



Title-page of the Fior di Virtu, 1493 (1490).

to indicate the motion of travelling by showing the travellers in different positions in the same picture. Not only thus do Dante and his Guide appear in every cut, but in almost every cut they appear twice, and, in many, three times. Fortunately they are very dignified little figures, so that the monotony is more easily forgiven, but by the second artistic convention dignity is sadly sacrificed. For the *Divina Commedia* is concerned entirely with souls, and in these days a soul was distinguished by

Dante and Pope Adrian. From P. Cremonese's DANTE, *November*, 1491.

the absence, not of its body, but of its clothes. The perpetual recurrence of these little naked figures, mostly bald (though Dante seized one of them by his hair) is merely annoying and quite destructive of the dignity of the design. The cut here chosen is from the nineteenth canto of the *Purgatorio*, where Dante talks with the avaricious Pope Adrian (who, of course, retains his tiara), and is a typical example of the less distressing kind. The larger illustration forms the frontispiece by which Codeca's edition partly atones for the inferiority of its vignettes to those of Cremonese's. In the original it is surrounded by the same border which

is shown in the reproduction facing p. 46, from Codeca's *Petrarch*. Next to the Dantes, the most important illustrated book of 1491 is the *Vite de'*

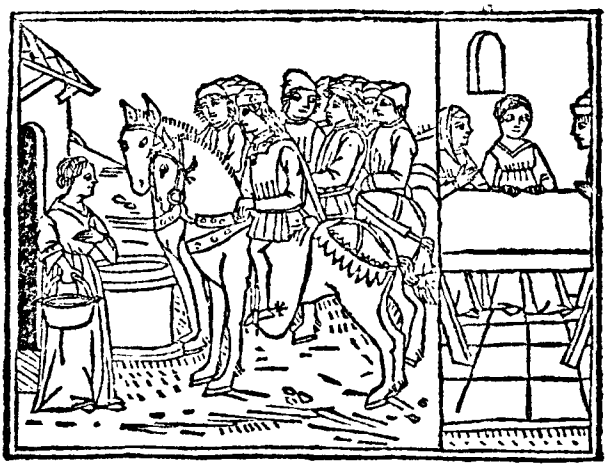
Frontispiece to Codeca's DANTE. *March*, 1491.

Santi Padri, printed by Giovanni Ragazzo for Lucantonio Giunta. This, in addition to a frontispiece, made up of small pictures of saints within

a border, has no less than 388 vignettes (including some repetitions), some of them signed b, others b., others i or j. As Giunta had been the publisher of the Malermi Bible, it is not surprising to learn that some of the cuts signed b are taken from that work. Altogether the *Vite* command attention rather from their bulk and the number of the illustrations than from their artistic importance. In another 1491 book, the *Legenda delle Santa Martha e Magdalena*, we find Codeca imitating Giunta's economy, many of the cuts in this being taken from his editions of the *Meditationi* of S. Bonaventura. In this year were also published, by the brothers De Gregoriis, the *Fasciculus Medicinæ* of Joannes Ketham, which in this edition only possesses some cuts of horrid-looking surgical instruments and anatomical figures, and by Giovanni Ragazzo a *Plutarch* with a border to its first page of text, and a single woodcut (reproduced by Dr. Lippmann, p. 95). The maidens patiently awaiting the result of the combat which Theseus is here represented as waging within circular lists with a creature half man, half horse, justify the common description of it as "Theseus and the Minotaur." The Minotaur was properly half man, half bull, and the artist appears to have confused this conflict with that which the same hero carried on against the Centaurs. The picture, repeated in the edition of 1495, is a fine one, the figure of Theseus, as sword in hand he averts the Centaur's club and grasps at his long hair, being especially good.

In 1492 the illustrators were no less active than in the two preceding years. Giunta brought out a new edition of his Bible, and combined with Codeca in a re-issue of that printer's *Meditationi.* He also employed Zoan Roso da Vercegli to print a *Vita de la preciosa Vergene Maria* in quarto, with a charming border, which, save for the substitution of the figure of a scribe for one of Christ in the centre-piece, was repeated in the *Trabisonda istoriata*, printed by Christof Pensa de Mandel, in the same year. Within this border in the *Vita* is a large vignette of Joachim dividing a sheep into three shares, one for the priest, one for a beggar, and one for himself. The text is illustrated by a large number of little cuts, some of them from the Malermi Bible; others, according to the Duc de Rivoli, from the series afterwards found in the Livy of 1493.

Giunta's previous record entitled his books to priority of notice, but the chief illustrated editions of this year came from other firms. The brothers Joannes and Gregorius de Gregoriis especially distinguished themselves by the publication of the *Decamerone* of Boccaccio and *Novellino* of Masuccio. Of the former we give reproductions of the first page of text, of the double cut which heads the tales of each of the ten days,* and of the little vignette to the story of Griselda, in which the Marquis is shown surprising his too patient wife as she fetches water from the well, and in conference with her and her mother over the terms of the marriage contract. The delicate grace of all these pictures, and of the fine border to the frontispiece, speaks for itself. Of the vignettes, there are one hundred in all, one to each tale, that of Griselda being, perhaps, a rather favourable example. Of the *Novellino* of Masuccio I know only the 1510 reprint by Zani da Portese, in which both the large cut of the author presenting his book to the Duchess of Hippolyta of Calabria, and most, if not all, of the fifty-five vignettes, have been re-cut. As Zani issued a *Decamerone* in the same year, in which the illustrations had been similarly treated, it is so much the easier to reconstruct the original *Novellino* in our imaginations. Along with these two books in 1510, Zani printed also the *Settanta Novelle* of Sabadino degli Arienti, of which Dr. Lippmann records his issuing an edition seven years earlier, in 1503. The cuts in all three books are so closely



Griselda surprised by the Marquis.
From the DECAMERONE *of* 1492.

* In the Bodleian copy, and one recorded by the Duc de Rivoli, three of the days are headed by a different and less effective double cut.

Chapter-heading showing the Procession to the Garden and the Narrators. From the DECAMERONE *of* 1492.

alike that it seems probable that there must have been a still earlier *Settanta Novelle* in which the brothers De Gregoriis may have had a hand as early as 1492.

The remaining book nominally of the year 1492 which we have yet to notice is a new edition of the *Trionfi* of Petrarch, the printing of which, by Codeca, was finished in January 12th, 1492–3, though its publication was delayed in order that the *Sonetti*, finished March 28th, might be issued with it. The illustrations in this are certainly the most successful of the three series designed for the book. The artist takes his ideas from his predecessor of 1490, but by judicious selection reduces the overcrowded pictures of his model into harmonious arrangement, while his designs were interpreted by a fairly competent engraver, whose work, however, compares unfavourably with that in the *Decamerone*.

We have already alluded by anticipation to the Italian *Livy* printed by Zoan Vercellese for Giunta in 1493, with a border slightly altered from that in the Malermi Bible and innumerable vignettes, many of them marked F., some of which had been used before in the *Trabisonda* of the previous year. It is a delightful book, and the copy in the British Museum was doubtless rendered more delightful still in the eyes of its original possessor by most of the cuts having been rather daintily coloured, a process which the severer student of art vigorously condemns. Pretty as they are, however, they show no advance on previous books of the kind, and neither this nor the edition of the *Golden Legend* of Jacobus de Voragine which Giunta published the next year (it was printed for him by Codeca) need detain us.

With the *Voragine* the series of profusely illustrated folios may be regarded as practically closed, though in 1497 Simon de Luere revived them by adding to his *Terence* a number of rather poor vignettes imitated from the larger cuts in the Lyons edition of 1493. But, as we have seen, in the five years from 1490 to 1494, Giunta and the brothers De Gregoriis had illustrated the Bible, the Lives of the Saints and the Fathers, the *Divina Commedia*, the *Decamerone*, the *Novellino* of Masuccio, possibly the *Settanta Novelle* of Sabadino, and the only old-world history in which Italians took an interest, and the

series came to an end for lack of fresh worlds to conquer. It is possible that the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. contributed a little to this result, for, if we may take the books chronicled by Panzer as representative, the Venetian book-trade in 1495 fell off by about a seventh in that year. But there had evidently been a keen competition between the rival firms up to that date, and it is reasonable to suppose that they would in any case have preferred to rest content with re-issues of old works rather than to extend the same method of illustration to less popular ones. As regards the artistic value of the vignette series it is not easy to speak judicially. It may fairly be said that the effect of the multitude of little pictures is cumulative, and that no single example of them quite justifies the praises bestowed on them, or explains the charm they exercise. Dr. Lippmann is unkind enough to suggest that they were "intended simply as landmarks for the reader, to guide him in the search for special lines or passages." No doubt they served this purpose, but I cannot think it was their final cause. If we could have been in a Venetian bookshop when the bookseller was tempting a hesitating purchaser, I think we should have heard him expatiating on their gaiety and prettiness rather than on their utility as an index, and it is this gaiety and prettiness which makes them so much beloved by the bookmen of the present day.

In order to finish with the vignettes we have anticipated a little, and must now go back to 1493, to look at the new edition of the *Fasciculus Medicinæ*, this time in Italian, which the brothers De Gregoriis brought out in that year. This has four new full-page cuts representing respectively a physician lecturing from his rostrum; a consultation of physicians (here shown); a dissection, with a physician lecturing on it to his students, and a plague-stricken patient, his pulse being felt by a doctor, who smells his pouncet to avoid infection, while two pages hold flambeaux, nurses attend to the sick man's wants, and a cat sits serene and unconcerned on the tessellated pavement. Each cut measures no less than $7\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the effect sought and obtained is of a larger and more pictorial kind than in any of the woodcuts at which we have hitherto looked. Translated into oils the pictures would have

been extremely striking; they are striking regarded as single cuts; as illustrations to a thin, rather closely printed folio, they are almost a mistake, though a very interesting one.* Nevertheless, they were a success, for the book was reprinted with them in 1495 (when poor puss was cut out of her picture) and again in 1500. It is notable as showing the really popular nature of this work that the cuts were sometimes printed very roughly in colours. The Latin *Herodotus*, printed by the brothers De Gregoriis in 1494, demands passing attention for its fine (though rather over-praised) border in white relief on a black ground. On the upper portion of this is a charming figure of a faun; in the lower a very finished little cut, introducing a turret-crowned lady, identified with Clio, though she should be Cybele, and some auditors in strange attitudes which have defied explanation. Within the border is a rather uncouth Herodotus whom Apollo is crowning as he sits at his table. With a different cut the same border was repeated by the De Gregoriis in their edition of St. Jerome's Epistles of 1497.

While these large books were being issued for well-to-do purchasers, the wants of humbler readers had been provided for by a stream of small quartos which it is impossible to record individually. An edition of *Æsop*, imitated from that of Verona, 1479, went through numerous editions; so did the *Fior di Virtù*, and the *Meditationi* at which we have already looked, and an *Epistole ed Evangelii*, first issued in 1475, with numerous, but feeble, little pictures. Two charming outline cuts (the one representing St. John Baptist and St. Peter upholding an emblem of the Trinity; the other St. John the Evangelist and St. Francis supporting one of the B. Virgin) appear at the beginning of at least five little books, of which one, the *Doctrina della Vita Monastica* of Lorenzo Giustiniano is further enriched by a very pictorial cut of a preacher preceded by a little crucifer, which Dr. Lippmann thinks was imitated from a picture painted by Gentile Bellini in 1466 for the Church of St. Maria del Orto. In a little four-page flysheet commemorating the *Lega facta novamente a morte e destructione de li Franzosi* in 1495,

* The reduction of a third in our reproduction of the "Consultation" rather improves it as a book illustration.

there is a fine picture of the pope blessing a kneeling warrior, conceived somewhat in the style of the *Ketham*. A delightful outline cut of a lecturer and his class is found in the *Speculum finalis retributionis* of Petrus Reginalditus (1498), and again in the *Summula* of Occam, while the *Libro de l'occhio morale* is enriched by one in a similar style of a friar preaching. Single cuts of great interest occur also in the *Epigrammata Cantalycii* of 1493, and the *Fioretti* of St. Francis printed in 1495. Now and again it is possible to class two or three of them together as exhibiting the work of the same artist or engraver; but these humbler books have suffered far more severely from the ravages of time than the large folios: many have doubtless perished utterly, and those that survive are scattered over many libraries and collections, and their study is thus rendered extremely difficult.

The year 1496 was not at all productive of illustrated books, but from the press of Johann Hertzog there issued an edition of the Epitome by Johann Müller (Johannes Regiomontanus) of the *Almagest* of Ptolemy. This has a fine frontispiece which it is a pleasure to reproduce—all the more so as the bolder and heavier style of engraving in the figures of the astronomer and his commentator warns us of the change which was soon to come over the art at Venice. The next year Simon de Luere printed the *Terence*, with the poor vignettes we have already mentioned, and two fine full-page pictures, the one representing the comedian lecturing to his future commentators, the other a view of a Roman theatre as seen from the stage.

The same year Giunta came once more to the fore with an edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, illustrated with fifty-nine finely designed but poorly executed woodcuts, measuring about $5\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and thus much more pretentious than the little vignettes on which Giunta had hitherto relied. Many of these woodcuts are marked ia, a signature which Dr. Lippmann, on the score of the absence of any dividing stop, seems fully justified in distinguishing from the Z. A. which occurs on so many sixteenth-century woodcuts, and is generally identified with the mark of Zoan Andrea Valvassori. His suggested identification of the ia with the

work of a certain Jacob of Strassburg, to whose known woodcuts they bear no visible resemblance, is much less certain.

All the good qualities of the *Ovid* of 1497 are found united with admirable engraving in a much more famous book, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, printed by Aldus Manutius, in 1499, at the instance of Leonardo Crasso, a jurist of Verona. At the outset of his career, in the Greek and Latin *Hero and Leander* of 1494, Aldus, though the fact is often mercifully forgotten, had already attempted book-illustration. In two little cuts, which face each other and are probably the worst printed at Venice during that decade, we see Leander breasting the waves of the Hellespont while Hero watches him from her tower, and then his corpse thrown on the strand, and Hero precipitating herself on it through an impossibly small window. Aldus did not repeat this misdemeanour in his subsequent books, and it is reasonable to suppose that it is to Leonardo Crasso, rather than to the author of the unlucky experiment of 1494, that we owe the *Hypnerotomachia.*

The author of this book (I quote from my own previous description of it in my *Early Illustrated Books.* Kegan Paul & Co., 1893) was a Dominican friar, named Francesco Colonna, who had been a teacher of rhetoric at Treviso and Padua, and was now spending his old age in the convent of SS. Giovanni e Paolo in Venice, his native city. His authorship is revealed to us in a sentence formed by the initial letters of the successive chapters: "Poliam Frater Franciscus Columna peramavit." Brother Francesco Colonna greatly loved Polia. In the opening chapter this lady tells her nymphs that her real name was Lucretia, and she has been identified with a Lucretia Lelio, daughter of a jurist at Treviso, who entered a convent after having been attacked by the plague which visited Treviso, 1464–66. Polifilo's dream is assigned to May-day, 1467, at Treviso, so that place and date fit in very well.

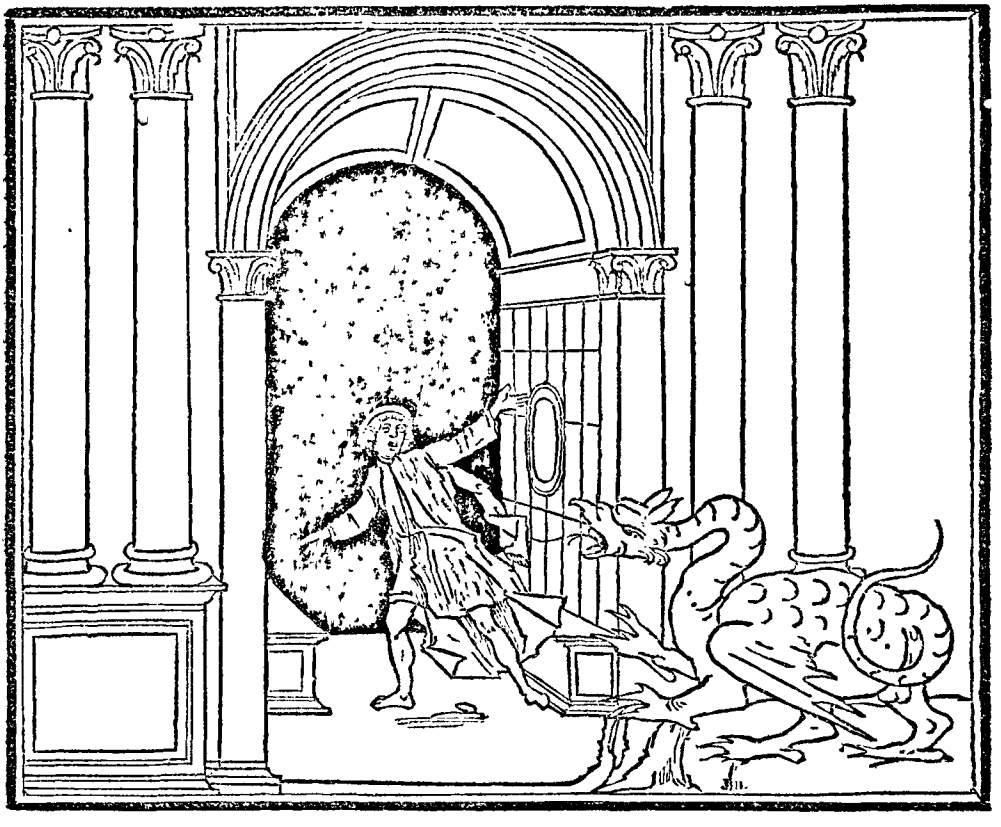
The lover imagines himself in his dream as passing through a dark wood, till he reaches a little stream by which he rests. The valley through which it runs is filled with fragments of ancient architecture, which form the subject of many illustrations. As he comes to a great gate he is frightened by a dragon. Escaping from this, he meets five nymphs, and is brought to the court of Queen Eleuterylida. Then follows a description of the ornaments of her

VMANA COSA E LHAVER COMPASSIONE
A GLI AFFLITTI. e come che ciascuna persona sia
bene a chiaro assai massimamẽte e richiesto liquali già ha
uto di conforto bisogno sofferti & hanolo trouato in al
cuno sia liquali se alcuno mai hebbe ogli fe caro o gra
ziosamente piacere. Io sono uno di quelli poi che dal
la mia prima giouanezza infino a quello tempo altra
mente essendo stato accolto da ciascuno & nobilmẽte
se forse piu assai che la mia bassa conditione non pare
be bastando lo si richiedesse comunque doppo
coloro che discreti erano & alli cui notitia pruẽtio ne fussi lodato & da mol
to piu reputato. Non dimeno mi fu egli di grandissima fatica a sofferire
non per cruccio della donna amata per souercio amore nella mente con
cepto da poco regolato appetito. liquale perche a niuno regolato conuenga
le termine nullatẽ contento stare piu di noia che di bisogno no era spesse vol
te seruire mi faceua. Nella qual mia tanto refrigerio mi porsero li piacevoli
ragionamenti dal comun amico & le dilettevole sue cõsolatiõe che lo porto sa

The Triumph of Love. From Petrarch's TRIONFI, 1492–3.

A Consultation of Physicians. From Kerbam's Fasciculus Medicinæ, 1493.

palace, and of four magnificent processions, the triumphs of Europe, Leda, and Danaë, and the festival of Bacchus. After this we have a triumph of Vertumnus and Pomona, and a magnificent picture of nymphs and men sacrificing before a terminal figure of the



Polifilo frightened by the Dragon. From the HYPNEROTOMACHIA, 1499.

Garden-God. Meanwhile Polifilo has met the fair Polia, and together they witness some of the ceremonies in the temple of Venus, and view its ornaments and those of the gardens round it. The first book, which is illustrated with 151 cuts, now comes to an end.

Book II. describes how the beautiful Polia, after an attack of the plague, had taken refuge in a temple of Diana; how, while there, she dreamt a terrifying dream of the anger of Cupid, so

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that she was moved to let her lover embrace her, and was driven from Diana's temple with sticks; lastly, of how Venus took the lovers under her protection, and at the prayer of Polifilo caused Cupid to pierce an image of Polia with a dart, thereby fixing her

The Meeting of the Lovers. From the HYPNEROTOMACHIA, 1499.

affections on Polifilo as firmly as he could wish. This second book is illustrated with only seventeen cuts, but as these are not interrupted by any wearisome architectural designs, their cumulative effect is far more impressive than those of the first, though many of the pictures in this—notably those of Polifilo in the wood and by the river, the encounter with the dragon, his presentation to Eleuterylida, the scenes of his first meeting with Polia, and some of the incidents of the triumphs, are quite equal to them.

Our reproductions show the incident of Polifilo's encounter with the dragon, from Book I.; the lovers embracing, from Book II.; and the well-known full-page picture of the worship of the "Garden-God," in reproducing which the precedent has been followed which was set in the edition of the cuts issued by the Science and Art Department in 1888.

In 1500 Joannes de Spira printed for Giunta an edition of the Rules of St. Benedict and other monastic orders, with a fine frontis-piece representing St. Benedict and St. Scholastica. With this exception we may take the *Hypnerotomachia* as marking the close of the artistic period of book-illustration at Venice. The little vignettes which had come into existence during the decade we have been examining were used again and again, sometimes for new books, sometimes for re-issues of old ones, but no fresh work of this kind seems to have been done. After 1500, almost the only important illustrated books issued were the numerous Missals and other liturgical works printed chiefly for the firms of Giunta and Stagninus. Now and again, as in the Missals of 1506 and 1509, these attain some delicacy, but for the most part they are overloaded with coarsely executed ornaments, the work in which is of the most mechanical kind. The style of engraving used in these illustrations is heavy and hard, and it is a pleasure to turn away from them to review the little Florentine pictures, the most charming of all Italian woodcuts, at which we must now look.

CHAPTER IV

Florence

Compared with that of the Venetian printers, the output of the Florentine presses during the fifteenth century was almost insignificant. The lists in Panzer's *Annales* are, of course, far from complete, but if we take them as representative we shall find that the whole number of books registered as printed in Florence from 1490 to 1500 does not equal the number issued at Venice in a single year, and even if we make some allowance for a larger proportion of Florentine books having been published without date or printer's name, the ratio will not be seriously altered. Only about fifteen printers appear to have worked at Florence during this decade, and only four of these, Francesco Buonaccorsi, Francesco di Dino (who had previously printed at Naples), Antonio Mischomini, and the firm of Lorenzo di Morgiani and Giovanni di Piero di Maganza (Johannes Petri of Mentz), were at all prolific. All of these printed books with illustrations, and about 1495 their activity was greatly stimulated by the appearance of an enterprising publisher in the person of Ser Piero Pacini da Pescia, whose name is thenceforward connected with a very large proportion of the illustrated books produced at Florence during the next fifteen years.

We have already, in our second chapter, noticed the copper engravings used in the editions of the *Monte Santo di Dio* of 1477, the *Dante* of 1481, and for the maps in the *Sette Giornata della Geografia* of 1480, all published by Nicholaus Lorenz. It is at first sight curious that the cheaper and easier process of wood-engraving should not have been used for the decoration of books until as late as 1490. We must remember, however, that the

From the Hypnerotomachia, 1499.

copper-plates were obviously regarded as a failure, and that the *litterati* of Florence at this period were the most aristocratic in Italy. The companions of the Medici, who amiably proved the reasonableness of Christianity out of the Greek philosophers, would care little for the cuts that found favour in the religious chap-books of the poor, and down to the end of the century every handsome book printed in Florence was left for the illuminator to decorate. There seems to have been no demand from the burgher class for editions of *Dante* and *Boccaccio*, such as found favour in Venice, or, if there were, it was satisfied by importation. With about three exceptions, the books at which we shall look in this chapter are all printed in small quarto or octavo, and the immense majority of them are more or less religious.

We have said that no Florentine book with woodcuts, with an earlier date than 1490, is known to be extant; it is probable, however, that one or two may have been printed which have now perished. An edition of the *Specchio di Dio* of Cavalca, printed by Francesco di Dino, and dated March 27 in that year, contains a rudely cut picture of the Crucifixion which bears traces of once having been surrounded by a chain-work border. The cut must, therefore, have been used before, and may one day be discovered in a copy of some similar work printed in 1488 or 1489. It reappears in 1492, in an edition printed by Mischomini (June 26) of Savonarola's *Tractato dello Amore di Jesu Christo*, and a fragment of the border can still be traced.

The second Florentine woodcut which has as yet been discovered in a dated book is found on the back of the eighth leaf of the *Laudi* of Jacopone da Todi, printed by Francesco Buonaccorsi, September 28, 1490. The Franciscan mystic, to whom we owe the *Stabat Mater*, has closed his book and put it down by the little reading-desk, and is kneeling in an ecstasy of prayer before a vision of the Blessed Virgin, seated in a *mandorla*, or almond-shaped shrine, supported by angels. The picture is thoroughly Florentine, and full, as Dr. Lippmann very justly remarks, of the same delicate charm which distinguishes the fine silver-point drawings of the Florentine school at this period. The woodcutter has not

The Vision of S. Jacopone. From his LAUDI. *Florence*, 1490.

failed to do it justice, though he has taken less pains with the faces of the supporting angels than with the two chief figures. No other woodcut in any Florentine book quite approaches its delicate

grace, and we note that the characteristic Florentine device of working in white relief upon black, as well as in black upon white, is not yet employed. It is thus very interesting to compare it with the woodcut of St. Augustine writing at his episcopally begirt desk,

St. Augustine or St. Antonino. From the SOLILOQUII, 1491.

which ornaments the title-page of an edition of the *Soliloquii volgari*, printed November 10, 1491,* but by what firm is not stated. In design this picture is hardly less fine than that of S. Jacopone da Todi, and it is not impossible that it may have been the work of

* It recurs in the 1493 *Curam illius habe* of St. Antonino, printed by Morgiani and G. di Maganza.

the same artist. The cutting is much bolder and more vigorous, and in place of the delicacy of the earlier cut we have a richness of general effect, largely due to the deep black of the open cupboard and the bars of the little window, which is hardly less pleasing. Closely linked with this St. Augustine cut is another which appears

St. Augustine (?). From the SERMONI VOLGARI, 1493.

on the title-page of the *Sermoni volgari* printed by Antonio Mischomini, June 28, 1493, though it may have been designed for some earlier edition. Some similarities of style and arrangement make it reasonable to attribute this to the same artist, but the success attained is less complete. The contrast of black and white is here supplied by the border in which the little picture is framed, the only black space in the cut itself being the niche in the wall

above the saint's desk. We miss altogether the delicacy of the Jacopone, and there is but little of the compensating richness of the earlier Augustine cut. But perhaps it is only by comparison with these two that we reckon the artist to have failed.

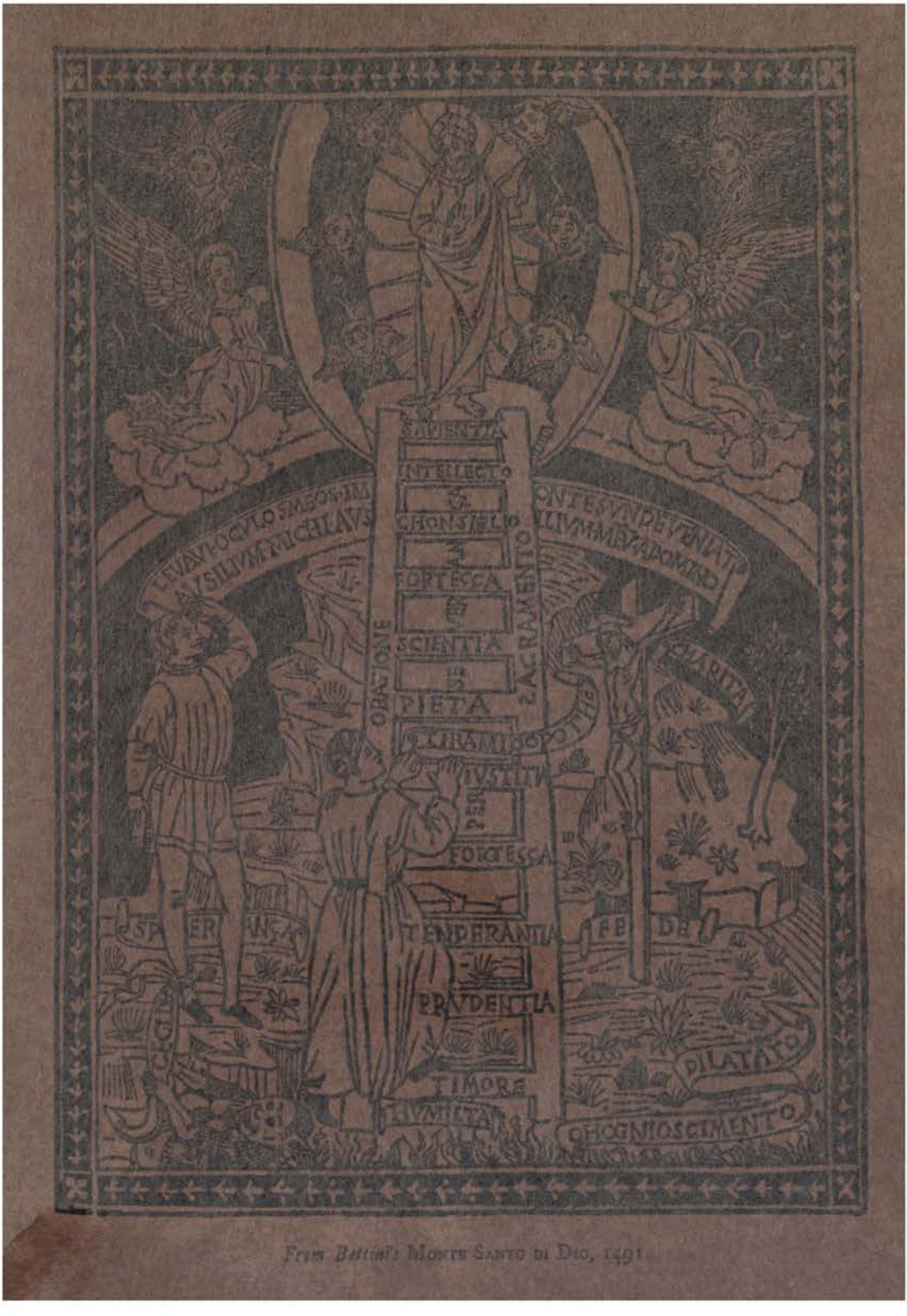
Along with the two St. Augustine cuts we must mention the picture of a youthful master teaching an eager class which adorns the *Formulario di lettere e di orationi volgari composto per Christofano landini*, printed by Mischomini in 1492, and the cut in *Alchuni singulari tractati di Vgho Pantiera da Prato*, printed by Lorenzo di Morgiani and Giovanni da Maganza on December 15 of the same year. The latter is almost put out of court by its too simple device of indicating the proper relations of master and pupil by an absurd difference in size, the figure of the pupil being drawn on a much smaller scale. The *Landini* cut, on the other hand, is really beautiful, and it is a pity that an indiscreet early possessor of the British Museum copy has seen fit to further adorn it with the aid of red chalk.

Meanwhile other experiments in woodcutting had been made, to which we must now draw attention. On March 20, 1491, Morgiani and Giovanni da Maganza finished printing a new edition of Bettini's *Libro del Monte Santo di Dio*, in which the three copper engravings of 1477 were freely reproduced upon wood. The method of translation is very interesting, as the woodcutter has freely altered both the designs and the tones in order to accommodate them better to his own art. Each picture is now framed in a typical Florentine border of white upon black, and the ground-work is now black, relieved, however, by innumerable little dots, dashes, or thin lines of white. In the "Christ" (reproduced by Dr. Lippmann, p. 27), the "mandorla" is now formed by a double row of white clover-leaves, if a name must be found for them. At its base it is supported by two angels, whose tripping gait and flowing draperies have the peculiar Florentine grace. Two smaller angels, hovering in the air, support the mandorla from above. At the head and foot is a winged cherub-head, and two others are poised comfortably in the air on each side. The central figure, standing on the white clouds at the foot of the mandorla, is dignified, and the pensive face, though

not entirely successful, shows that the second artist was more anxious than his predecessor to represent the character of the Man of Sorrows. The main changes in the design may all be traced to the artist's consciousness that he was working within a frame, all of which he was anxious to fill, the four angels being brought further away from the mandorla to occupy the corners, while the two midmost angels and two of the cherubs of the copper-engraver are now omitted.

The same rearrangement and selection marks the "Monte Santo," here reproduced. On the copper, the whole of the upper part of the plate is studded with cherubs' heads; the face of Christ follows the same model as in the larger plate; the quotation from the Psalms, *Levavi oculos*, etc., which here repeats the form of the rainbow, is only a label stretching from the youth's head to the ladder; the demon, not content with entangling the youth's feet in the gauds of blindness, is striking at him with a prong; the little tree on the right of the mount is omitted, etc., etc. The differences are small in themselves, but they are interesting as betokening the independent spirit in which the second artist reproduced the design of his predecessor. We need not, however, trace them also in the third picture, representing the torments of hell, which in both editions is singularly weak. The woodcut of Christ in Glory, from the *Monte Santo* was used again as the title-cut of the *Libro molto deuoto e spirituale de' fructi della lingua* of the same printer, completed on September 4, 1493. The other two cuts I have not met again, nor any others of equal size or quite in the same style.

Another book which stands alone in the method of its decoration is a little treatise on Arithmetic, by Philippo Calandro, dedicated to Giuliano dei Medici, and proceeding from the same press as the *Monte Santo*. Its frontispiece of "Pictagoras [*i.e.*, Pythagoras], Arithmetice Introductor," is in very thin outline. The earlier pages are surrounded by an arabesque border, with little medallions and other designs; the text they enclose consisting of rows of little quaintly shaped figures. The body of the book is printed in black-letter, and many of the problems are illustrated by tiny cuts, about three-quarters of an inch square, which are very charming. I take



From Bettini's Monte Santo di Dio, 1491

this opportunity of apologising to Ser Calandro for a gross injustice I passed upon him by a slip of the pen in my notice of his Arithmetic in my *Early Illustrated Books.* One of his illustrated problems is of a fat cat who each day climbed half-a-yard up a tree in order to catch a squirrel, and each night slipped back a foot. The squirrel, on its side, slipped a quarter of a yard each day and retreated a fifth of one each night. The tree was $26\frac{3}{4}$ yards high. When would they meet? The real answer is 121, and for the carelessness by which I wrote a three for a two, and thus damaged the author's reputation as an arithmetician, I sincerely apologise.* The *Aritmetica* was reprinted in 1518 by Bernardo Zucchecta, with the same ornaments, but in Roman type instead of black-letter. It is a fascinating little book, but has none of the characteristics of Florentine work.

One other cut in an unusual style remains to be noticed. The first known occurrence of this is in the *Tractato della Humiltà* of Savonarola, printed by Mischomini, June 30, 1492. The border, however, which is similar in style to that of the *Cavalca*, (which four days earlier Mischomini had used again in his edition of the *Tractato dello Amore di Jesu*) shows signs of wear, and we may conjecture that the cut had been in existence for some time, and may possibly have been drawn by the same artist as that of the *Cavalca*, though interpreted by a far more able woodcutter. It represents a "Pietà," the dead Christ in a tomb leaning in front of the Cross, while two lily-bearing angels support His arms. The cutting is rich and bold, and the whole picture is thoroughly Florentine in its feeling and grace, though the style was not employed again.

We have already had occasion to mention the woodcuts in two editions of works by Savonarola, and we must now approach the consideration of the long series of his tracts and sermons, the cuts in which are among the most important examples of Florentine work. After preaching at Genoa during the Lent of 1490, Savonarola had been recalled to Florence, it is said by Lorenzo de' Medici himself,

* By way of penance, I demonstrate its correctness. In each 24 hours, cat and squirrel come $\frac{13}{60}$ of a yard closer; ∴ in 120 days they will have approached 26 yards, and will complete the remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ on the evening of the 121st, before they begin to retreat again. But they must have been very tired!

and preached his first public sermon there on August 1st. During his previous stay in Florence, whither he had been sent from his convent at Ferrara in 1482, during the Ferrarese war, his preaching had attracted little attention, and it was only with his sermons preached at Brescia during Lent, 1487, that he had become known. His sermon of August 1, 1490, at St. Mark's, electrified Florence, and thenceforth to the day of his death his influence was enormous.

Savonarola's mother was a member of the family of Buonaccorsi, and I have pleased myself with imagining that the Francesco Buonaccorsi who printed the *Laudi* of Jacopone da Todi on September 28, 1490, and the next year issued the first edition of the *Libro della Vita viduale*, which is, I believe, the earliest dated Savonarola tract, may have been an uncle or cousin, and that Savonarola may have had some direct share in the introduction of artistic book-illustration into Florence. However this may be, it is certain from his published sermons that he was keenly alive to the service which art might render to the cause of religion, and there is thus every reason to believe that the illustration of his tracts was no mere publisher's venture, but that it was done by his wish, and possibly to some extent under his superintendence. In the Appendix to Villari's *Life of Savonarola* (Italian edition) a contract is printed, concluded in 1505 between his friend Lorenzo Violi and two printers, Antonio Tubini and Bartolommeo Ghirlandi, for a reprint of the *Prediche* of 1498. According to this contract Violi was to supply the paper necessary for an edition of eleven hundred copies, and to pay the printers week by week at the rate of two and a half lire for every ream (four hundred and forty sheets) printed off, the printers undertaking to print off the whole eleven hundred copies at the rate of not less than one sheet (four pages) every working day. The contract is an interesting one for the history of printing, and it suggests that during Savonarola's life the same sort of arrangement may have been in vogue, to some extent under his control.

In a delightful monograph published in 1879 M. Gustave Gruyer gave a nearly exhaustive list of the illustrated Savonarola tracts, and the woodcuts they contain. Of the sixty-eight different cuts (including

variants) which he enumerates, about a dozen belong to Venice, Milan, Ferrara, and Rome. Variants account for about fifteen more, and four or five others are so small as to require little notice. We are thus left with upwards of forty different subjects, which fall into three classes, dealing respectively with the Passion of Christ, with

Gethsemane. From Savonarola's TRACTATO DELLA ORATION , 1492.

Prayer and Preparation for Death, and with the representations, always imaginary, of Savonarola himself. The first of these classes includes a number of very small cuts, but the treatment of four of the subjects claims especial attention. Of the Agony in the Garden three different woodcuts have come down to us, all of them of great beauty. The one here shown was apparently the favourite, for it occurs again and again in various editions of his tracts. Of the two variants, one, in which only the hands of the angel are shown, occurs in the *Tractato overo Sermone della Oratione* (Mischomini, October 20,

1492); the other, in which the angel appears on the left instead of the right, in an undated edition of the *Expositione del Pater Noster*.

Of Christ carrying the cross there are three variants, two of them occurring in different editions of the *Tractato dell' Oratione*, the third in the *Tractato dell' Amore di Jesu Christo:* all three being of great beauty, though, as M. Gruyer points out, neither the figure nor the face of Christ is impressively rendered. The Crucifixion itself is shown in two different sets of cuts, in one of which St. John, the Blessed Virgin, and St. Mary Magdalen stand beside the cross; in the other only the first two. The finest examples of both occur in editions of the *Tractato dell' Amore*, the first being also found in the *Dieci Comandamenti* of October 24, 1495, and the second in the *Libro da Campagnia di Battuti* (Morgiani and G. di Maganza) of 1493. Another cut of great beauty represents Christ holding the cross in one hand, while from the other He allows blood to trickle into a chalice. This is found in an undated edition of the *Tractato della Humiltà*, and in other works.

Of the woodcuts illustrating the duties of prayer and the preparation for death, the best known, but not the finest, are those found in the different editions of the *Prediche dell' Arte del ben Morire*. One edition of this is heralded by a hideous title-cut of Death flying over ground strewn with his victims; the other cuts represent (1) Death showing a youth God in glory and the Devil in torment; (2) a sick man on his bed, Death sitting outside the door; (3) a monk ministering to the sick man, Death now seated at the bed's foot. In another edition the title-cut is omitted; the vision of Heaven and Hell is recut (now measuring $5\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ inches instead of $6 \times 4\frac{1}{2}$), and occurs twice, and the cut of the monk's ministrations is also new. M. Gruyer mentions an edition similar to this, and with the cut of the vision appearing only once, but with a title-cut of a Triumph of Death, which, from his description, must clearly be taken from the Florentine *Trionfi* of Petrarch, and therefore later than 1499. The other cuts, even in the better of the variants, appear to me to be overrated. Though on a comparatively large scale for Florentine work, their effect is cramped and poor, the

figures seeming too small for the great room, while the woodcutter was not particularly skilful.

Infinitely finer than these is the magnificent title-cut (reproduced in my *Early Illustrated Books*, p. 114) of an edition of the *Operetta della Oratione mentale*, in which a man is kneeling in prayer before a crucifix in a little chapel. Here the floor and the further wall of the chapel are in black with lines of white, the shadows of a door and window deep black, and against this background the figure of the worshipper and the altar and crucifix are in relief. The whole effect has the severity and breadth of a great picture, and can hardly be surpassed. Another edition of the same work has a title-cut, probably by the same artist, of a man and woman kneeling in prayer on either side of an altar, above which is a crucifix in relief against a black hanging. A third chapel scene, of which two variants exist, is found in the *Trattato del Sacramento*, and shows a priest elevating the Host before a little crowd of worshippers. With these Savonarola cuts we may join two others representing Confession: the first and finer, in which there is only a male penitent, occurring in the treatise *Defecerunt* of St. Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence (the venerated saint of Savonarola's convent); the other, in which there are both a man and a woman, in the same writer's 'somma,' entitled *Omnis mortalium cura*.

Despite the fact that the portraits have no claim to be authentic, the cuts in which Savonarola himself is shown naturally possess a peculiar interest. The largest and finest of these, reproduced by M. Gruyer, occurs in the *Dyalogo della verità prophetica*, and shows Savonarola talking with seven Florentines under a tree. In the distance is seen the Duomo, in mid-air are hovering the Holy Dove and tongues of fire. Savonarola is in his black robe, and the keen face assigned to him is doubly impressive from the cowl which surrounds it. Next in interest to this is the little cut, here given, from the *De Simplicitate Christianæ Vitæ* (P. de Pacini, September 5, 1496), in which he is seen writing in his cell. The title-cut of the *Compendio di Revelatione* (September 1, 1495), which represents him preaching before a crowded audience, is badly rendered, and the same fault mars the picture of his argument with

an astrologer in the *Tractatus contra astrologiam.* The *Compendio,* however, has two other cuts (besides a full-page crown of glory), both showing Savonarola on an embassy to the Blessed Virgin, attended by Simplicity, Prayer, Patience, and Faith. In the first, and finer, he meets the Devil, attired as a hermit; in the second he arrives at the entrance to the celestial city. Three other cuts

Savonarola in his Cell. From his De Simplicitate, 1496.

represent his relations with the Convent of "Murate," or Recluses of Florence. In one of these, repeated in many different tracts, he is being welcomed to their convent; in another (if the boy preacher can stand for him) he is addressing the nuns; in the third he is presenting his treatise on the Ten Commandments to the Abbess.

Along with the Savonarola tract-books we must mention the *Tractato di Maestro Domenico Benivieni, prete Fiorentino, in defensione et probatione della doctrina et prophetie predicate da Frate Hieronymo da Ferrara* (printed by F. Buonaccorsi for Pacini, May 28, 1496), which has a title-cut of Benivieni eagerly arguing in Savonarola's defence, and a full-page illustration of the reformer's vision of the

regeneration of the world by the river of blood flowing from the crucified Christ being literally used for the washing away of sins. Two other religious books, whose titles clash with those of works by Savonarola, must be mentioned. Of these the most important is an undated edition of the *Arte del ben Morire* of Capranica (reprinted 1513), in which two of the large cuts from Savonarola's work of the same name were used again, along with small ones also found in his books, and ten important cuts in which the old block-books of the *Ars Moriendi* are imitated with much freedom and grace.

The other, and earlier book, the *Libro delli Comandamenti di Dio*, of Frate Marco del Monte Sancta Maria, is notable for possessing a large woodcut (hardly ever found uncropped) imitated from a very fine early copper-plate, an example of which is in the Print Room at the British Museum. In the lower corner the Frate is preaching; in the middle of the picture (greatly abridged in the woodcut) are represented the works of mercy; in the upper section are Christ and the Blessed Virgin in glory, and between them a "Loco tondo et vacuo" in place of any more anthropomorphical depictment of the Almighty. The artist has shown some skill in selection, but the coins in a "Monte della Pietà" are made to look strangely like a beehive, and when we realise that they are really coins, we wonder why the prisoners, who are meant to be stretching out their hands for alms, appear so very much as if they were helping themselves in rather a different fashion from that which the proverb commends. Two other pictures illustrate the giving of the Law, and there is also a title-cut. The book was printed by Mischomini in 1494. To Mischomini's press also belongs an undated Florentine edition of the *Devote Meditationi* of St. Bonaventura, in which (along with extra illustrations from other works) we find a number of designs of the Venetian editions recut, with a gain in depth and a variety of tone so great as to afford a striking example of the superiority of the Florentine school of engraving. Two other little didactic books printed by Mischomini may also be noted. The first of these is an edition of the *Fior di Virtù* (see p. 40), in which the beautiful Venetian title-cut was

rather clumsily copied, and surrounded by an ugly border, while the Venetian vignettes were improved into charming little pictures, in which the larger half was occupied by the human instances, which the Venetian artist had neglected, and only the smaller by that from animal life. The first Florentine edition of this book was issued, I believe, in 1493, but I only know the cuts as they occur in the 1498 edition, where they are mixed with others originally designed

Studies of Fear. From the FIOR DI VIRTU, 1498 (1493 ?).

for other works. The cut here shown, which illustrates Terror—in men by the instance of Damocles, in animals by the rabbits running from an imaginary hunter—is one of the original set of cuts, and its charm can hardly be surpassed. Mischomini's other didactic book, printed March 1, 1493–4, is the *Libro di Giuocho delli Scacchi intitolato dei costumi degl' huomini e delli officii de' nobili*, an Italian version of the moralisation of the game of chess by Jacobus de Cessolis. It is illustrated with a large title-cut of courtiers playing the game with a king as umpire, and thirteen smaller cuts, cleverly drawn, but a little stiff, of the different functions and occupations which the pieces and pawns were supposed to represent.

After 1495 Mischomini disappears, but his place as a publisher

Frontispiece of the PTOLEMY, 1496.

of illustrated books was amply supplied by Ser Piero Pacini, of Pescia, whose name we have already had occasion to mention in

The Triumph of Love. From Petrarch's TRIONFI, 1499.

connexion with some of the Savonarola tracts. In 1495 he commissioned two very important illustrated editions—an *Æsop*, printed

for him by Buonaccorsi, and an *Epistole e Evangelii*, giving the epistles and gospels throughout the year in Italian, for which he employed Morgiani and G. di Maganza. The *Æsop* I am unlucky enough not to have seen. The earliest edition of the *Epistole* which has come under my notice is that of 1515, in which there are no less than eighty different cuts. In both editions there is a fine title-page, showing Christ with a book and a sword, and St. Peter with a book and a key, standing in an arch enclosed in an arabesque border on a black ground, in the corners of which are figures of the four Evangelists.

In 1499 Pacini published a very interesting little book, an edition of the *Trionfi* of Petrarch, in which most of the cuts are suggested by those in the Venice edition of 1490. Only one copy of the book is known to exist, that in the Vittorio Emmanuele Library at Rome, but this has been reproduced in (rather poor) facsimile. Of the six full-page cuts that of the Triumph of Death was used again, as we have seen, in one of the three editions of Savonarola's *Arte del ben Morire*. Another, unluckily not by any means the finest, occurs on the title-page of Pacini's 1508 edition of the *Quatriregio* of Frezzi. This is the only one available for reproduction, and it is therefore given here, and its contrast to the treatment of the same subject in the Venetian cut already shown is very instructive. The Venetian edition is a pretentious folio, in which the commentary overshadows the text. The Florentine is a thin quarto, probably sold for a few pence. But in grace and artistic feeling the Florentine edition is incomparably the finer. This is especially shown in the Triumph of Divinity, in which the woodcutter has unconsciously reproduced much of the charm of the earlier Florentine copper-plate, though he does not seem to have known of the existence of this, and worked as we have said from the Venetian edition of 1490.

The *Quatriregio* of Frezzi, from whose title-page we have thus borrowed, is almost the only pretentious book illustrated in the Florentine style.* Its size has perhaps earned for it more attention than its artistic

* The only other I know of is the *Morgante Maggiore* of Pulci, a long poem on the adventures of Orlando, printed in 1500, the unique copy of which I am not fortunate enough to have seen. According to Dr. Lippmann, it has two hundred and twenty cuts.

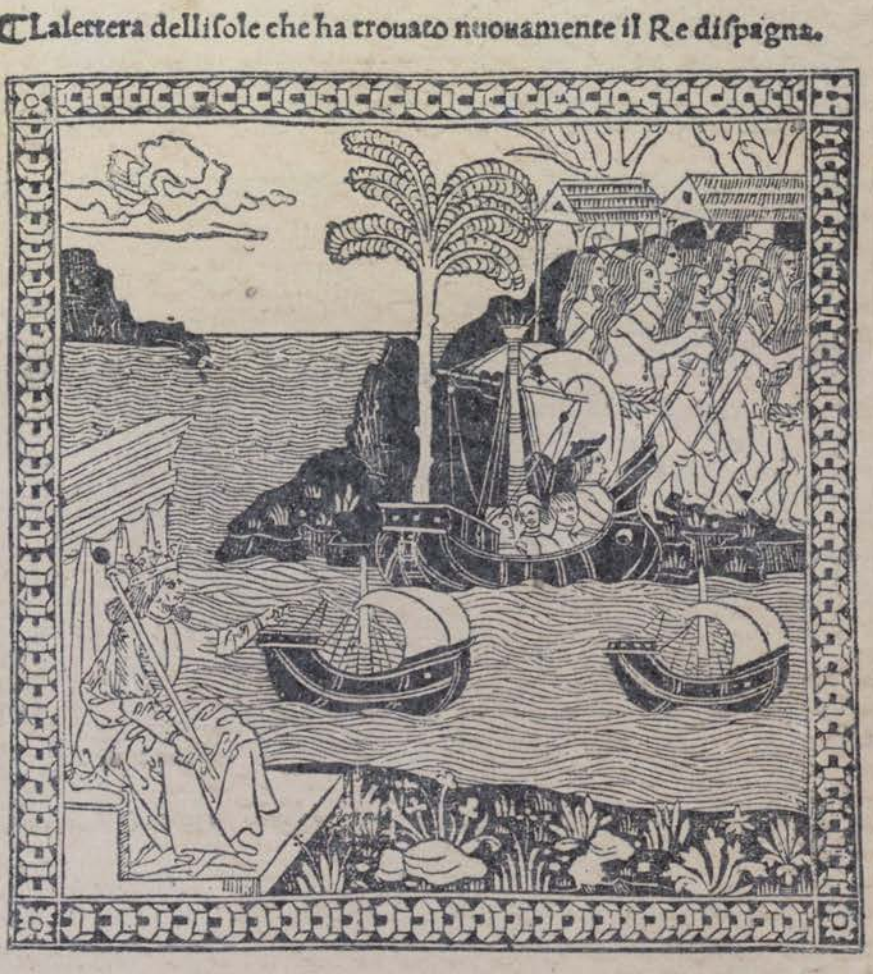
merits deserve. Its author, a Bishop of Foligno, who died in 1416, was ambitious of emulating the *Divina Commedia*, and conducted his hero through the four kingdoms of Cupid, Satan, the Vices, and the Virtues. Like the greater work, it suffers, from the illustrator's point of view, from the perpetual recurrence of the same two figures, the author and the lady who guides him. The majority of the hundred and

The Pursuit of Cupid. From the QUATRIREGIO, 1508.

twenty-six cuts which it contains are angular and hard. The one here shown, in which Cupid, represented as an evil spirit, is endeavouring to hide himself from pursuit, is pronounced by so good a judge as Mr. Horne (who wrote on the book in Vol. III. of *The Hobby-horse*), to be the finest of the whole series, but it can hardly stand comparison with the beauty found in the best of the earlier Florentine cuts.

In 1509 P. Giunta printed a little Dante with a frontispiece which may have been specially designed for this edition. Save for this we may regard the *Quatriregio* as closing the cycle of original Florentine illus-

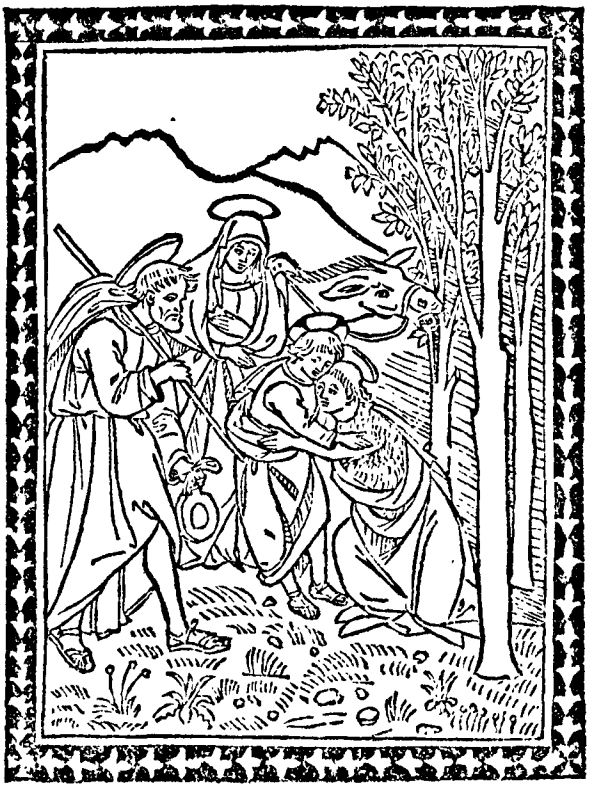
trated books. But our survey of them is not yet complete. Throughout the whole period from 1490 to 1508, innumerable chap-books were issued, mostly with only one, but sometimes with several cuts. A prince among these is the *Lettera dell' isole che ha trouato nouamente il re*



The Discovery of the Indies. 1493.

dispagna (1493), a translation into *ottava rima* of the famous letter of Columbus, the unique copy of which, in the British Museum, might well be valued at a thousand pounds. The little stream which separates the King of Spain from the islands with their pleasing savages gives but a quaint idea of the Atlantic, but the picture is a very delightful

one. To enumerate such single tracts would be endless, but there is one large class of them which we are bound to notice, the *Rappresentationi*, or plays on the lives of the saints and of Christ, which were in great vogue in Florence from the last quarter of the fifteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth. These plays were written in *ottava rima*, and the earliest author of them who obtained the honours of print seems to have been Maffeo Belcari, who died in 1484. I believe I am right in saying that no illustrated edition of any *Rappresentatione* bears an earlier date than 1501, but there are several of Belcari's, and others by Lorenzo de' Medici, Bernardo and Antonio Pulci, Giuliano Dati, Giuntino Berti, and some anonymous authors, which exist in editions printed in the same types as many of the Savonarola tracts, possibly by Francesco di Dino.



From the RAPPRESENTATIONE DI SAN GIOVANNI QUANDO FU VISITATO PER CHRISTO NEL DISERTO.

Our two illustrations are both from plays by Belcari, the first from one of St. John the Baptist visited by Christ in the Desert, the second from his *Rappresentatione di Sancto Panuntio*. This latter requires a little explanation, which may serve as a sample of these charmingly simple entertainments. Panuntius was a hermit, who thought rather well of his own piety. So he prayed that he might be shown another as devout as himself, and was intensely surprised when an angel bade him make the acquaintance of "Quel cantor

sublime che suona e canto in questo borgo primo." "O poor Panuntius!" the saint exclaims; "either you are not at all what you have been esteemed by holy fathers of sincerity, or this musician must have some touch of great virtue which remains hidden from the world!" But to the town he goes, finds the musician singing a cheerful

From the RAPPRESENTATIONE DI SAN PANUNTIO.

song, and proceeds to cross-examine him. The musician had been a robber, but he was a kindly rogue, had saved a girl's virtue and paid the debts of a poor woman, so grace was given him to repent, and now he helps to keep people cheerful and free from "accidie," and is full of faith and contentment. Panuntius is more astounded still when he hears that this change was wrought "without the aid of any sacred book," and falls on his neck; the musician on his

side is so touched that he breaks his flute and becomes a monk, a little to our disappointment.

The copy at the Bodleian Library, in which I first read this simple story, was undoubtedly printed about 1500; the Museum copy from which this reproduction is taken is dated 1565, but the cut, save for a break in the border, is practically uninjured. The long life of these cuts makes the dating of anonymous editions no easy matter, as a little accidental carefulness in the impression often gives a spurious appearance of early date. A sure test of this, but one that cannot often be applied, is where there are several cuts all obviously appropriate to the story. This is the case with the four cuts in the *Sancto Paulino*, the *Stella*, and the *Reina Hester*, at the Bodleian Library, all of which have plainly been designed for these particular plays. But in the *Barlaam et Josafat*, whose appearance is very much the same, four of the seven cuts are dragged in from the *Fior di Virtù* (one of them being that of Damocles and the Rabbits!), and the *Fior*, the *Epistole e Evangelii* and the Savonarola tracts furnished a large number of the cuts which appear in the countless editions which were issued throughout the sixteenth century.

Along with the *Rappresentationi* we must mention the *Novelle*, or short stories in verse, which are far more difficult to meet with, though Dr. Hermann Varnhagen has lately been lucky enough to unearth a collection of over a score of them in the Erlangen Library, some with specially designed illustrations, others with cuts obviously borrowed. There seems, however, no reason to believe that any of the special designs were made much, if at all, after 1508, and the progressive deterioration of such of them as were recut shows how quickly the artistic feeling died out which had given birth to these most charming of all Italian book illustrations.

CHAPTER V

FERRARA—PAVIA—MODENA—MILAN—SALUZZO

BESIDES Venice and Florence, Ferrara, to whose illustrated books M. Gustave Gruyer devoted a series of articles in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* of 1888–89, and Pavia, on whose books Dr. Paul Kristeller contributed a masterly article to Part III. of *Bibliographica*, are the only cities in Italy whose woodcuts have as yet been carefully studied. After the little cut of the Pope and Cardinals in the *Clementinæ* of 1479 (mentioned on p. 29), there is a gap of ten years in Ferrarese illustration, which begins again with two editions of a *Leggenda del Sancto Maurelio*, a Bishop of Ferrara, printed by Lorenzo de Rossi in 1489. Both of these possess a rudely cut portrait of St. Maurelius, but in one of them there is also a far finer picture of St. George. Four years later Andreas Gallus printed the *Compilatio* of the astronomer Alfraganus, with a frontispiece in which he is represented instructing a hermit, who, as in the Florentine *Tractati di Vgho Pantiera* (p. 59) is reduced to proper insignificance by a much smaller scale. In 1496 Rossi printed the *De ingenuis adolescentium moribus*, with a really fine frontispiece of the Virgin and Holy Child, which in cutting and design resembles, while it surpasses, the Venetian *Dialogo* of St. Catharine of Sienna (p. 34). In the following year the same printer produced three notable books, a *Uffizio* of the B. Virgin, which I have not seen; the treatise *De pluribus claris selectisque mulieribus* of Philippus Bergomensis, and the *Epistole* of St. Jerome. The frontispiece in the *Epistole* is distinctly Venetian, resembling closely in style those of the *Decamerone* of 1492, the *Livy* of 1493, and the rest of the series produced in these years. Moreover, it is actually dated on the columns MCCCCL/XXXIII., and there

can be little doubt that it was really executed in Venice. It is probable that the one hundred and eighty little vignettes which adorn the text, chiefly illustrating the monastic life, have the same origin. They are pretty and interesting, but have nothing to distinguish them from average Venetian work of the same date. The *Bergomensis* is more important. Its frontispiece, in which the author (sadly in need of shaving) presents his book to Beatrice of Aragon, imitates the Florentine use of the relief of white against black, and yet has sufficient individuality to recall the contemporary Ferrarese school of painting. The numerous small portraits in the text vary in merit; the earlier ones, in which the artist drew from his imagination, being mostly poor, while a few of the latest, representing the great ladies of the day, are obviously imitated from portraits in different styles, and are of great interest. The last in the book, here shown, represents Damisella Trivulzia, then a girl of fourteen, and is entirely charming. The series of Ferrarese books is continued by a Missal of 1503, with a cut of St. Christopher; Niger's Funeral Oration over Ercole d'Este I., and a few other books; but the *Bergomensis* of 1497 represents its highest attainment.

Damisella Trivulzia. From the DE CLARIS MULIERIBUS. *Ferrara*, 1477.

Of the books printed at Pavia, investigated by Dr. Kristeller, I do not propose to say much, as his article has only recently appeared. They begin with an incredibly rude cut of the Crucifixion in a Missal of 1491, and reach their best in the little figures of bishops and saints in the *Papie Sanctuarium* of 1505, in the portrait of Quintianus Stoa in his *De Quantitate Syllabarum* (1511), and in the interesting initial letters found in the *Singularia* of M. de Matthesilanis (1501), and the

Commentaria and *Repetitio* of Philippus Decius (1506-7). In these initials profile busts of the authors are introduced, standing out prominently from the black ground and giving the impression of a medal, and Dr. Kristeller hardly exaggerates when he calls them "masterpieces of the art of portraiture."

The Pavese books were so learned that their publishers could, as a rule, neither borrow nor imitate their cuts from those printed in other towns; but these restrictions did not exist in many places. We have thus to be on our guard against too lightly attributing woodcuts to an artist of the town where the book is printed. In the first place, blocks were borrowed. Dr. Lippmann has already noticed (*op. cit.*, p. 96) the appearance of the Theseus and Minotaur from the *Plutarch* of 1491 at the end of *De Structura compositionis* of Ferettus, printed at Forli in 1495, and I am able to identify the other cuts in the book, of which he rightly suspected the Venetian origin, as having been borrowed from the *Epigrammata Cantalycii* of 1493 (p. 49). Again, earlier cuts might be closely imitated, as is the case with those in the Silber and Plannck edition of the *Meditationes* of Turrecremata, which are copied from Numeister's edition of 1479 (p. 27). Once more, both artists and printers occasionally moved about: Boninus de Boninis, a lover of illustrated books, who worked at Venice, Verona, and Brescia, being an instance of a travelling printer, while Dr. Kristeller shows good reason to believe that the engraver of some of the Pavese cuts had previously worked at Milan. For these reasons the study of the illustrated books of the smaller centres of printing in Italy is peculiarly difficult, and it is only an investigator like Dr. Kristeller, who has hunted for them in almost every library in Europe, who can pursue it with success. I show here a little cut of the making of a monk, which occurs in the Latin and Italian editions of the *Prognosticato* of Lichtenberger, printed at Modena in 1492, as an example of how good the work in some of these smaller centres occasionally was; but I know of no other illustrated Modenese book, and my knowledge of the woodcuts found in books printed at Bologna, Cremona, and other Italian towns, is similarly fragmentary.

Of books published at Milan, more is known, though they have not yet been arranged in any series. No woodcuts are recorded

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